THE JUNIOR·SCHOOL SHAKESPEARE

THE MERCHANT·OF VENICE

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24 AUG 1959

THE JUNIOR SCHOOL SHAKESPEARE

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

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Printed in Great Britain by Blackie & Son, Ltd., Glasgow

GENERAL PREFACE

The Junior School Shakespeare is an attempt to provide an edition of the best plays which will meet the needs of the youngest students of the dramatist. All the plays in the series are edited on the same general plan, which presents some novel features. Its characteristics may be stated thus:

The *Text* has in every case been prepared with great care. All passages that it might be thought undesirable to read in class have been omitted.

In the *Introduction*, while all necessary information is furnished concerning the origin and date of the play, and other such externalia, it has been considered equally important to discuss, in simple and familiar language, the literary qualities of the play, and its characters.

The aim of the *Notes* is to explain briefly and clearly all unfamiliar words and allusions, and to point out some of the differences between Elizabethan and Present English without excess of philological material. Additional features are: that a free paraphrase is given wherever a verbal explanation would be insufficient; that parallel passages and references to other authors are very sparingly employed; and that there are hints towards the interpretation of character and motive, and towards the appreciation of the play as an actual work of stagecraft.

The *Classified Index* gathers up and tabulates the notabilia of the play, supplying full references to the notes bearing on them, and is intended to assist the student in obtaining a thorough grip of his work.

It is believed that this edition will be found particularly suited to junior candidates in the University Local and similar examinations, the editors of the several volumes being teachers who have practical experience of their needs.

The series will also be found suitable as annotated reading books in the upper classes of those elementary schools in which Shakespeare is read.

INTRODUCTION

I. THE DATE OF THE PLAY

THE date of the composition of a play of Shakespeare's is of some importance in two respects: (1) it enables us to place the play in its right order among the rest; (2) it enables us to see under what influences Shakespeare wrote, and to mark a stage in the development of his power and art. There is in many cases a difficulty in determining this date, owing to the fact that very often a play was not printed until long after it was written; so that the date of its printing is not a good guide to the date of its composition. As a matter of fact, not one-half of Shakespeare's plays were printed during his lifetime, and several of those that were printed came out without his consent or knowledge. The explanation of these facts is, that Shakespeare, being an actor as well as a dramatist, had an interest in keeping his plays in manuscript. They were part of the stock-in-trade, so to speak, of the particular company of actors to which he belonged, or in whose performances he was directly interested. It was important, therefore, that they should not get into the hands of other companies, who might give representations of them, or into the hands of the public, who would perhaps not be so eager to see the performance of a play which they had previously read.

In fixing on a probable date for the composition of any play, the scholars who have studied the subject depend on two kinds of evidence: (1) external evidence; that is, records of printing or performance, allusions in books by other authors,

events which may have suggested scenes, &c.; (2) internal evidence, such as allusions in the play to past or contemporary events. A second kind of internal evidence is gained by very careful study of points which young students cannot fully appreciate, such as minute questions of style; but there are certain obvious differences between the early and the late plays which all can see. Thus, the early plays contain many classical allusions, many instances of word play, many riming lines, and many passages in which the sense is not run on from line to line, but where nearly every line is either a complete sentence or clause of a sentence. The later plays contain less rime, fewer puns, fewer classical allusions, and the blank verse shows more freedom and power.

In regard to the date of *The Merchant of Venice*, the following scheme shows the external evidence, going backwards from the date of printing:—

1600. First printed, by two different printers, James Roberts and Thomas Heyes.

1598. Entered on the Stationers' Register by James Roberts, who was, however, forbidden to print it until licensed by the Lord Chamberlain, among whose company of players Shakespeare then was.

1598. Mentioned in a list of Shakespeare's plays in *Palladis Tamia*, or *Wit's Treasury*, a little book containing comparisons of English with classical authors, by Francis Meres.

1594. Philip Henslowe, a theatrical manager (who spelt very badly), mentions in his diary a play called *The Venesyon comodey*, which may be Shakespeare's play. Shakespeare's company was certainly acting at Henslowe's theatre in this year.

From this it appears that the play was not composed later than 1598, and may have been composed in 1594 or even earlier.

The internal evidence shows that while the play exhibits many of the characteristics of early plays, yet it has also points of likeness to the later plays. For instance, the puns, rimes, and classical allusions are numerous, which is a mark

of early work; while the lofty thought, the admirable blank verse, and the vivid character painting are marks of maturity.

On the whole, it is thought that *The Merchant of Venice* was composed about 1596, and in part rewritten before it was printed in 1600.

2. THE SOURCE OF THE PLOT

Shakespeare seldom invented his plots. He usually took some story which he had heard or read, or which he had seen represented on the stage, and made that the foundation of his wonderful work as we know it. The sources from which he is believed to have obtained the stories of *The Merchant of Venice* are as follows:—

(1) An old play called *The Iew and Ptolome*, in which two stories showing "the greedinesse of worldly chusers and bloody mindes of usurers" are combined.

(2) The *Adventures of Giannetto*, from a collection of tales called *Il Pecorone*, by Giovanni Fiorentino, published at Milan in 1558. This gave Shakespeare the story of the bond, the name of Portia's house, the plan which Portia invented for freeing the merchant, and the incident of the ring in the fifth act.

(3) A translation of the *Gesta Romanorum*, which gave the story of the caskets.

(4) The *Ballad of Gernutus*, an old poem from which Shakespeare perhaps got the incident of Shylock's whetting the knife.

(5) Silvayn's *Orator*, in which is an argument about a Jew "who would for his debt have a pound of the flesh of a Christian".

3. THE STORIES OF THE PLAY

The plot consists of a skilful blending of two stories, which may be called briefly the story of the bond and the story of the caskets. The following outline will show how intimately the two are connected:—

Antonio, a rich Venetian merchant, has ventured all his wealth in a fleet of ships which have sailed on trading voyages into all parts of the world. A settled sadness which he cannot account for seems to give an omen of failure. Just at this time, when he can little afford it, his friend Bassanio begs of him a loan of 3000 ducats, in order that he may have the means necessary to make a presentable appearance as suitor for the hand of Portia, a rich heiress, who lives on an estate called Belmont. Antonio, unable to lend the money, but unwilling not to help his friend, borrows the money from Shylock, a rich money-lending Jew. Shylock, at first feigning to be unwilling to lend the money, and breaking out into bitter reproach against Antonio for the scorn and contempt with which he has treated him, at last consents, on one condition, which he proposes, as he says, "in a merry sport"—that Antonio will sign a bond in which he agrees to lose a pound of flesh if the money is not repaid within three months. Shylock declares that these are easy terms on which to borrow, and Antonio, thinking himself fortunate in not having to pay a monstrous interest, agrees to them, in spite of misgiving on the part of his friend. The Jew's real hope is that Antonio will fail to pay, and that he will himself be able, by taking his pound of flesh and so killing Antonio, to have revenge for the opposition which the Christian merchant has raised against him in Venice. With the money thus obtained Bassanio makes his preparations. He takes into his service Launcelot Gobbo, a clownish fellow who has left the service of Shylock, and sets off for Belmont, accompanied by his friend Gratiano, who has just assisted another friend, Lorenzo, in running away with Jessica, the Jew's daughter.

Meanwhile, at Belmont, several high-born suitors have been endeavouring to win Portia as their wife. By her father's will, the man she is to marry is the one who, from three caskets of gold, silver, and lead, chooses the one in which her portrait is placed. She has talked over the qualities of the various gentlemen with Nerissa, her maid, and finds none of them to

her liking; indeed, the only one for whom she has a good word is Bassanio, whom she saw once before when he visited the house in her father's lifetime, among the retinue of a Venetian nobleman. At length two suitors try their fortune, the Prince of Morocco and the Prince of Arragon. These choose the caskets of gold and silver respectively, but neither contains the portrait, and Portia is delighted at their failure. Then comes Bassanio, and Portia, letting him see by many a word and look how she loves him, awaits with anxiety the choice he will make. He passes by the caskets of gold and silver, and chooses the leaden one, which contains the portrait. So he and Portia are happily betrothed, and she gives him a ring which she makes him promise never to part with. At the same time Nerissa, with whom Gratiano has fallen in love, has betrothed herself to him and given him a like present.

At this moment Lorenzo and Jessica arrive, with Salerio, who brings Bassanio a letter from Antonio. It appears that Shylock has been in a terrible fury at the flight of his daughter, who took away with her a large sum of money and a valuable jewel, and has grown still more embittered against Antonio, believing him to be concerned in her flight. And now the opportunity has come for his revenge, for Antonio's ships are reported lost, and the time is drawing near for the repayment of the debt. Antonio, fearing that his life will soon be ended, wishes Bassanio to come and see him before his death, though he is unselfish enough not to press him to come. Bassanio is much troubled by the letter, but Portia, as soon as she knows the facts, tells him that he must at once return to Venice, and carry money with him to satisfy the Jew. Accordingly, he waits only to be married, and then with Gratiano sets off for Venice.

Having arrived there, he endeavours to get Shylock to accept the money, but in vain. The day is past, and he will have nothing but his bond. The case comes into court before the duke. Again the Jew is offered his money, doubled, but

again he refuses to accept it, declaring that if the terms of the bond are not carried out, the boasted impartiality of the Venetian laws is a sham. The duke is about to dismiss the court until a learned doctor of the law, Bellario, shall have arrived, when a lawyer's clerk enters, bearing a letter from Bellario, in which he pleads sickness as the reason of his not attending, but introduces a learned young man whom he sends in his place. The young lawyer enters, and is heartily welcomed by the duke, who does not know that he is entertaining a lady in disguise. For the "learned young man" is none other than Portia. When her husband had left Belmont, she had gone off at once with Nerissa to see Bellario at Padua; he had heard from her the whole story and instructed her in the law; she had persuaded him to let her represent him in the court, and now she was come to save her husband's friend.

She begins by assuring Shylock that the law is on his side, and when, in answer to her remark that he must be merciful he asks why *must* he, she gives a beautiful description of mercy, and shows how it is not only right but wise to be merciful. Then, when Shylock has again refused thrice his money, she tells Antonio that the Jew must have his pound of flesh, which delights Shylock, who calls the disguised lady a wise young judge, a second Daniel. Then, just as Antonio's bosom is bared, and Shylock approaches with his sharpened knife, Portia bids him stay. He must not shed one drop of blood, she tells him, or all his goods are forfeited to the state. Now Gratiano begins to mock the Jew, repeating ironically the compliments which he had bestowed on the wise young lawyer. Shylock is now willing to accept three times his money, but Portia will not let him have it. She goes on to say that if he cuts more or less than an exact pound, he must lose all his goods and be put to death. The Jew is overwhelmed, and then Portia relentlessly goes on to show that, having clearly made an attempt against the life of a citizen, one-half of his goods goes to the injured man,

the other half to the state, and his life itself is at the mercy of the duke. To show the mercy which Shylock refused, the duke now gives him his life, and Antonio begs the duke to allow the Jew to keep half his property, on condition that he gives up to Antonio the other half in trust for his daughter's husband after his death, that he at once becomes a Christian, and that he makes a will in favour of his daughter and son-in-law. Shylock, utterly broken down, agrees to it all, and leaves the court saying he is not well.

Antonio and Bassanio then offer Portia payment for her services, which she refuses, but succeeds after some difficulty in getting her ring from Bassanio, while Nerissa, as her clerk, gets hers from Gratiano. The play closes with a beautiful moonlight scene at Belmont, where Lorenzo and Jessica welcome home Portia and Nerissa. When the husbands enter, with Antonio, their wives charge them with having parted with the rings, and pretend not to believe their account of the matter. Then explanations are made on both sides, and all ends happily just as the faint streaks of dawn are appearing in the sky.

4. CRITICAL REMARKS

The Merchant of Venice is remarkable for the ingenuity with which the different stories are combined to form a natural and harmonious plot. The story of the bond, which is so serious and almost tragic, is lightened by Portia's love story, and by the subordinate stories of Gratiano and Nerissa, and Lorenzo and Jessica. All the incidents bear directly and naturally on the dénouement or "winding-up" of the play, and on the development of the principal characters, with the exception of the merely comic business, and of the scenes in which the Princes of Morocco and Arragon make their choice of the caskets. These scenes—which introduce two characters as it seems unnecessarily, but which clear the way for Bassanio's successful choice—are always omitted when the play is performed, but they are the occasion of some fine poetry.

The question has been raised whether Shakespeare had any particular purpose in writing this delightful play. If he had, it was probably to protest against the uncharitableness with which the Jews were still treated in his day. In England they were despised and looked on as inferior beings, in foreign countries they were bitterly persecuted. The play teaches, therefore, lessons of charity which may be summed up in the beautiful speech of Portia in the trial scene. Another lesson that has been suggested as running right through the play is the sacredness of promises, which underlies the mock reproaches and the pretty teasing of the last act.

Though the play takes its name from Antonio, **Shylock** is the central character, and on him Shakespeare spent his whole strength. At the opening of the play we see in him a grasping money-lender, who bitterly hates the Christian merchant on many grounds: (1) because he has gentle and conciliating manners ("How like a fawning publican he looks!" i. 3. 35); (2) because he is a Christian; (3) because he lends out money gratis, and has done his best to injure the Jew's business; (4) because he shows such bitter and persistent contempt for the Jewish nation. It is this last reason most of all which explains the Jew's cruel device for obtaining his revenge. He has a pride in his race which gives dignity to his character, and his powerful and eloquent pleas on behalf of his despised race produce a feeling of sympathy for him in spite of his detestable cruelty. And he is not a monster entirely without human feelings. He loves his daughter, though perhaps not so much as his ducats; and when he hears that she has given his rare turquoise ring in exchange for a *monkey*, he shows that he valued it chiefly because it was a present from his wife before their marriage. In the trial scene, when his cruel scheme has recoiled on his own head, and he is a broken-hearted ruined man, we see that his punishment is no greater than he deserved, but even now we feel some pity for him.

After Shylock, **Portia** is the most important character. Full of spirit, of happy innocent playfulness, and of every personal

and mental attraction, she has a bold and fearless mind that does not shrink from actions which might be regarded by some people as scarcely "proper". As soon as she knows that her husband's friend is in danger, she promptly and unselfishly makes up her mind to save him (though she might plead that he is nothing to her), and to part with her husband for a time, though she is only just married to him. Though she dresses as a man her conduct is in no way unwomanly. On the contrary, when she appears as a lawyer in court, she endeavours to dissuade Shylock from his revenge by appealing, as a woman would, to his feelings, to his reason, to his better nature. It is only when the milder course has failed that she becomes seemingly hard and relentless, and makes use of a legal quibble with which Bellario has primed her in order to effect her purpose. Her woman's nature is clearly shown by her exclamation when the duke exempts Shylock from the fine of half his goods to the state. "Not for Antonio," she says; that is, the other half must come to Antonio. She is not there confessedly as Antonio's advocate, but as an impartial judge; but she is evidently keenly looking after the interests of her husband's friend.

Antonio takes little active part in the play. He has only some 180 lines to speak, and yet we seem to know a good deal of his character. We learn much from what is said about him by his friends and by Shylock. Bassanio says he is—

> The kindest man,
> The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit
> In doing courtesies.

Salarino says:

> A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.

Shylock tells us that in guilelessness of heart he lends money gratis. He is a generous, unselfish man, ready to do anything for his friend, into whose love story he enters quite sympathetically. He is unsuspicious of Shylock's designs against

himself, but when the blow falls, he is patient in suffering, and when he sees nothing but death before him, he resigns himself courageously to his fate, only desiring that his last moments may be cheered by the presence of his friend. Even against Shylock, to whom in his prosperity he was, to say the least, ungenerous, he seems to feel no malice when in his power. But Antonio has his great fault, that of uncharitableness towards the Jewish race, in which, however, he is only like the actual men of Shakespeare's time. "To every one else he is a model of a true gentleman and a perfect Christian; but to Shylock he is rude, contemptuous, morally cruel, and sometimes even mean."

The other characters are of less importance, though all are admirably portrayed. Bassanio is a frank, rash, thoughtless, extravagant man: warm-hearted and loyal to his friend; quick-witted enough to suspect Shylock's good intentions, but not strong enough to refuse outright his consent to the bond; what people would call a thoroughly good fellow, but with no great distinction of character. To use a familiar expression, Portia is certainly the better half. Gratiano is a chatterer, always laughing and jesting, and yet contriving to say some very sensible things. His taunts against Shylock when things are turning against him at the trial seem like hitting a man when he is down, but Gratiano was one of those people who cannot help joking, and who do not mean all they say. The parts of Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, Salarino, and Salanio are very slight, but Shakespeare's genius is admirably shown in them, and in the small character of Tubal, the Jew who knows so well Shylock's weak points and so amusingly plays on them. The purely comic element is well provided by Launcelot Gobbo and his father, the former of whom persistently misuses words and wilfully misunderstands the words of others.

The serious action of the play closes with the trial scene, but by the incident of the rings Shakespeare ingeniously contrives to carry on the spectator's interest to the end. "Throughout the whole conduct of the play, what may be called its tragic

portion has been relieved by the romance which belongs to the personal fate of Portia. But after the great business of the drama is wound up, we fall back upon a repose which is truly refreshing and harmonious. From the lips of Lorenzo and Jessica, as they sit in the 'paler day' of an Italian moon, are breathed the lighter strains of the most playful poetry, mingled with the highest flights of the most elevated. Music and the odours of sweet flowers are around them. Happiness is in their heart. Their thoughts are lifted by the beauties of the earth above the earth. . . . And then come the affectionate welcomes, the pretty pouting contests, and the happy explanations of Portia and Nerissa with Bassanio and Gratiano. We are removed into a sphere where the calamities of fortune, and the injustice of man warring against man, may be forgotten. The poor merchant is once more happy" (Charles Knight).

PERSONS REPRESENTED

THE DUKE OF VENICE.

THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO, } suitors to Portia.
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON, }

ANTONIO, a Merchant of Venice.

BASSANIO, his kinsman, suitor likewise to Portia.

SALANIO, }
SALARINO, }
GRATIANO, } friends to Antonio and Bassanio.
SALERIO, }

LORENZO, in love with Jessica.

SHYLOCK, a rich Jew.

TUBAL, a Jew, his friend.

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, the clown, servant to Shylock.

OLD GOBBO, father to Launcelot.

LEONARDO, servant to Bassanio.

BALTHASAR, } servants to Portia.
STEPHANO, }

PORTIA, a rich heiress.

NERISSA, her waiting-maid.

JESSICA, daughter to Shylock.

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.

SCENE. *Partly at Venice and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia, on the Continent.*

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

ACT I

SCENE I. *Venice. A street*

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, *and* SALANIO

Ant. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 't is made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me
That I have much ado to know myself.

Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Salan. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind,
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads;
And every object that might make me fear

Misfortune to my ventures out of doubt
Would make me sad.
Salar. My wind cooling my broth
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
And, in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?
But tell not me: I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.
Ant. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.
Salar. Why, then you are in love.
Ant. Fie, fie!
Salar. Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad,
Because you are not merry: and 't were as easy
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,

And other of such vinegar aspect
That they 'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, *and* GRATIANO

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:
We leave you now with better company.
Salar. I would have stay'd till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.
Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you
And you embrace the occasion to depart.
Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.
Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say, when?
You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?
Salar. We 'll make our leisures to attend on yours.
[*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio*
Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you: but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.
Bass. I will not fail you.
Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world:
They lose it that do buy it with much care:
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.
Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage where every man must play his part,
And mine a sad one.
Gra. Let me play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?

Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!"
O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not, with this melancholy bait,
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile:
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time:
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years moe,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant. Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra. Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried. [*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo*

Ant. Is that any thing now?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

Ant. Well, tell me now what lady is the same

To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of?
Bass. 'T is not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time something too prodigal
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love,
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.
Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.
Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advised watch,
To find the other forth, and by adventuring both
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both
Or bring your latter hazard back again
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.
Ant. You know me well, and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;

And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost
Than if you had made waste of all I have:
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it: therefore, speak.
Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia:
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate!
Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money nor commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do:
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is, and I no question make
To have it of my trust or for my sake. [*Exeunt*

Scene II. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

Enter Portia *and* Nerissa

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences and well pronounced.

Ner. They would be better, if well followed. 10

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose'! I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none? 23

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come? 30

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest

them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that 's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'If you will not have me, choose': he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Ner. What say you then to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumbshow? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behaviour everywhere.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed under for another.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I 'll be married to a sponge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is indeed to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, he was so called.

Ner. True, madam: he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a Serving-man

How now! what news?

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

Whiles we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Exeunt*

Scene III. *Venice. A public place*

Enter Bassanio *and* Shylock

Shy. Three thousand ducats; well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound; well.

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. O, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet

his means are in supposition; he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, land-thieves and water-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

Enter ANTONIO

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

Shy. [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

Bass. Shylock, do you hear?

Shy. I am debating of my present store,
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire? [*To Ant.*] Rest you fair, good signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.
Ant. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. Is he yet possess'd
How much ye would?
Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.
Ant. And for three months.
Shy. I had forgot; three months; you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and let me see; but hear you:
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.
Ant. I do never use it.
Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor; ay, he was the third—
Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?
Shy. No, not take interest, not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did
When Laban and himself were compromised
That all the eanlings which were streak'd and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.
Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.

Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?
Shy. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast:
But note me, signior.
Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!
Shy. Three thousand ducats; 't is a good round sum.
Three months from twelve; then, let me see; the rate—
Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?
Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
"Shylock, we would have moneys": you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
"Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this:
"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurn'd me such a day; another time

You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I 'll lend you thus much moneys"?
Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty.
Shy. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys, and you 'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.
Bass. This were kindness.
Shy. This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.
Ant. Content, i' faith: I 'll seal to such a bond
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.
Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me:
I 'll rather dwell in my necessity.
Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:
Within these two months, that 's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.
Shy. O father Abram, what these Christians are,

Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship:
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.
Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.
Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight,
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently
I will be with you.
Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew. [*Exit Shylock*
The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.
Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.
Ant. Come on: in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day. [*Exeunt*

ACT II

SCENE I. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO *and his train;* PORTIA, NERISSA, *and others attending*

Mor. Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,

Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath fear'd the valiant: by my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:
But if my father had not scanted me,
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,
Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection.

Mor. Even for that I thank you:
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets
To try my fortune. By this scimitar,
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
So is Alcides beaten by his page;
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance.
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear, before you choose, if you choose wrong
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage: therefore be advised.
Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.
Por. First, forward to the temple: after dinner
Your hazard shall be made.
Mor. Good fortune then!
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.
[*Cornets, and exeunt*

Scene II. *Venice. A street*

Enter Launcelot

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me saying to me "Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot" or "good Gobbo", or "good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away". My conscience says "No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo", or, as aforesaid, "honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels". Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: "Via!" says the fiend; "away!" says the fiend; "for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind", says the fiend, "and run". Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me "My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son", or rather an honest woman's son; for indeed my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says "Launcelot, budge not". "Budge", says the fiend. "Budge not", says my conscience. "Conscience", say I, "you counsel well"; "Fiend", say I, "you counsel well": to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from

the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run.

Enter Old GOBBO, *with a basket*

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. [*Aside*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel-blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. By God's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? [*Aside*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters.—Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man and, God be thanked, well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend and Launcelot, sir.

Laun. But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. Of Launcelot, an 't please your mastership.

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Laun-

celot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased, or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may, but at the length truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man, and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem then that Dobbin's tail grows back-

ward: I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Laun. Well, well: but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew: give him a present! give him a halter: I am famished in his service: you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who indeed gives rare new liveries: if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune! here comes the man: to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, *with* LEONARDO *and other followers*

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [*Exit a Servant*

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify—

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve—

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify—

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins—

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having

done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you,—

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is—

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit:
Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,
And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son.
Take leave of thy old master and inquire
My lodging out. Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows': see it done.

Laun. Father, in. I cannot get a service, no; I have ne'er a tongue in my head. Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table,—which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune. Go to, here 's a simple line of life: here 's a small trifle of wives: alas, fifteen wives is nothing! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man: and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple 'scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she 's a good wench for this gear. Father, come: I 'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt Launcelot and Old Gobbo*

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:

These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteem'd acquaintance: hie thee, go.
Leon. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

Enter GRATIANO

Gra. Where is your master?
Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit*
Gra. Signior Bassanio!
Bass. Gratiano!
Gra. I have a suit to you.
Bass. You have obtain'd it.
Gra. You must not deny me: I must go with you to Belmont.
Bass. Why then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice;
Parts that become thee happily enough
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour
I be misconstrued in the place I go to
And lose my hopes.
Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say "amen",
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam, never trust me more.
Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night: you shall not gauge me
By what we do to-night.
Bass. No, that were pity:
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well:
I have some business.
Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest:
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt*

SCENE III. *The same. A room in Shylock's house*

Enter JESSICA *and* LAUNCELOT

Jes. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee:
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
Give him this letter; do it secretly;
And so farewell: I would not have my father
See me in talk with thee.
Laun. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew, adieu: these foolish drops do something drown my manly spirit: adieu.
Jes. Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot*
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [*Exit*

Scene IV. *The same. A street*

Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, *and* Salanio

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,
Disguise us at my lodging and return,
All in an hour.

Gra. We have not made good preparation.

Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

Salan. 'T is vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,
And better in my mind not undertook.

Lor. 'T is now but four o'clock: we have two hours
To furnish us.

Enter Launcelot, *with a letter*

Friend Launcelot, what 's the news?

Laun. An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem o signify. 11'

Lor. I know the hand: in faith, 't is a fair hand,
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, sir.

Lor. Whither goest thou?

Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

Lor. Hold here, take this: tell gentle Jessica
I will not fail her; speak it privately. [*Exit Launcelot*
Go, gentlemen, 21
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.

Salar. Ay, marry, I 'll be gone about it straight.

Salan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

Salar. 'T is good we do so.

[*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio*

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

Lor. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house,
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer. [*Exeunt*

SCENE V. *The same. Before Shylock's house*

Enter SHYLOCK *and* LAUNCELOT

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:—
What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandise,
As thou hast done with me:—What, Jessica!—
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out:—
Why, Jessica, I say!

Laun. Why, Jessica!

Shy. Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me that I could do nothing without bidding.

Enter JESSICA

Jes. Call you? what is your will?

Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:

But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
Look to the house. I am right loath to go:
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Laun. I beseech you, sir, go: my young master doth expect your reproach.

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. An they have conspired together, I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black-Monday last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year, in the afternoon.

Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces,
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear,
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:
But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah;
Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window, for all this;
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewess' eye. [*Exit*

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

Jes. His words were "Farewell mistress"; nothing else.

Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder;
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me:
Therefore I part with him, and part with him

To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse. Well, Jessica, go in:
Perhaps I will return immediately:
Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:
Fast bind, fast find;
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [*Exit*
Jes. Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [*Exit*

Scene VI. *The same*

Enter Gratiano *and* Salarino, *masqued*

Gra. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.
Salar. His hour is almost past.
Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.
Salar. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!
Gra. That ever holds: who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!
Salar. Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

Enter LORENZO

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I 'll watch as long for you then. Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who 's within?

Enter JESSICA *above, in boy's clothes*

Jes. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I 'll swear that I do know your tongue.
Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.
Jes. Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed,
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?
Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.
Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 't is night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange:
But love is blind and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.
Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.
Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
Why, 't is an office of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured.
Lor. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.
Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight. [*Exit above*

Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew.
Lor. Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,
And true she is, as she hath proved herself,
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

Enter JESSICA, *below*

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.
[*Exit with Jessica and Salarino*

Enter ANTONIO

Ant. Who's there? 60
Gra. Signior Antonio!
Ant. Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?
'T is nine o'clock: our friends all stay for you.
No masque to-night: the wind is come about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard:
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.
Gra. I am glad on 't: I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night. [*Exeunt*

SCENE VII. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

Flourish of cornets. Enter PORTIA, *with the* PRINCE OF MOROCCO, *and their trains*

Por. Go draw aside the curtains and discover
The several caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice.
Mor. The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire";
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves";

This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath".
How shall I know if I do choose the right?
Por. The one of them contains my picture, prince:
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.
Mor. Some god direct my judgement! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath".
Must give: for what? for lead? hazard for lead?
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross;
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."
As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand:
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady:
And yet to be afeard of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself.
As much as I deserve! Why, that 's the lady:
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces and in qualities of breeding;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?
Let 's see once more this saying graved in gold;
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire".
Why, that 's the lady; all the world desires her;
From the four corners of the earth they come,
To kiss this shrine, this mortal breathing saint:
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now

For princes to come view fair Portia:
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits, but they come,
As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is 't like that lead contains her? 'T were damnation
To think so base a thought: it were too gross
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
Or shall I think in silver she 's immured,
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?
O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
Stamped in gold, but that 's insculp'd upon;
But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within. Deliver me the key:
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

Por. There, take it, prince; and if my form lie there,
Then I am yours. [*He unlocks the golden casket*

Mor. O hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll! I 'll read the writing.

[*Reads*] All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgement old,
Your answer had not been inscroll'd:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.

Cold, indeed; and labour lost;
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!

Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.
[*Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets*
Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so. [*Exeunt*

SCENE VIII. *Venice. A street*

Enter SALARINO *and* SALANIO

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail:
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.
Salan. The villain Jew with outcries raised the duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.
Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail:
But there the duke was given to understand
That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica:
Besides, Antonio certified the duke
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.
Salan. I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
"My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats."
Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.
Salan. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

Salar. Marry, well remember'd.
I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried
A vessel of our country richly fraught:
I thought upon Antonio when he told me,
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.
Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.
Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answer'd, "Do not so;
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love:
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there":
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection wondrous sensible
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.
Salan. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out
And quicken his embraced heaviness
With some delight or other.
Salar. Do we so [*Exeunt*

SCENE IX. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

Enter NERISSA *with a* Servitor

Ner. Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain straight:
The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,
And comes to his election presently.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON, PORTIA, *and their trains*

Por. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince:
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized:
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.

Ar. I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 't was I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage:
Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Ar. And so have I address'd me. Fortune now
To my heart's hope! Gold; silver; and base lead.
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire".
What many men desire! that "many" may be meant
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet.

Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves":
And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune and be honourable
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
O, that estates, degrees and offices
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand bare!
How many be commanded that command!
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd
From the true seed of honour! and how much honour
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times
To be new-varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves".
I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[*He opens the silver casket*

Por. Too long a pause for that which you find there.

Ar. What 's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

Por. To offend, and judge, are distinct offices
And of opposed natures.

Ar. What is here?
[*Reads*] The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgement is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss:
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silver'd o'er; and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head:
So be gone, sir: you are sped.

Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here:
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.
Sweet, adieu. I 'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.

[*Exeunt Arragon and train*

Por. Thus hath the candle singed the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.
Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy,
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.
Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a Servant

Serv. Where is my lady?
Por. Here: what would my lord?
Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approaching of his lord;
From whom he bringeth sensible regreets,
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath.
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen

So likely an ambassador of love:
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.
Por. No more, I pray thee: I am half afeard
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.
Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.
Ner. Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be! [*Exeunt*

ACT III

Scene I. *Venice. A street*

Enter Salanio *and* Salarino

Salan. Now, what news on the Rialto?
Salar. Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcases of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.
Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,—O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—
Salar. Come, the full stop.
Salan. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses

Salan. Let me say "amen" betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

Enter SHYLOCK

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salar. There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto: a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh: what's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same

winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a Servant

Ser. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house and desires to speak with you both.

Salar. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter TUBAL

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

[*Exeunt Salanio, Salarino, and Servant*

Shy. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now; two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so; and I know not what's spent in the search; why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God, I thank God. Is 't true, is 't true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats!

Shy. Thou stickest a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it: I 'll plague him; I 'll torture him: I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that 's true, that 's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal, at our synagogue, Tubal.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, *and Attendants*

Por. I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.
There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well,—
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you
How to choose right, but I am then forsworn;
So will I never be: so may you miss me;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me;
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours. O, these naughty times
Put bars between the owners and their rights!
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.
I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time,
To eke it and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

Bass. Let me choose;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.

Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love:

There may as well be amity and life
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.
Por. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforced do speak anything.
Bass. Promise me life, and I 'll confess the truth.
Por. Well then, confess and live.
Bass. "Confess" and "love"
Had been the very sum of my confession:
O happy torment, when my torturer
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.
Por. Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
And what is music then? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch: such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live: with much much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

Music, whilst BASSANIO *comments on the caskets to himself*

SONG

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?
Reply, reply.
It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell:
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves;
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts:
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;
And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,
And you shall see 't is purchased by the weight;
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it:
So are those crisped snaky golden locks
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,

Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!

Por. [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!
O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess.
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,
For fear I surfeit.

Bass. What find I here?

[*Opening the leaden casket*

Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,
Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs
The painter plays the spider and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes,—
How could he see to do them? having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his
And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far

The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprizing it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here 's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.
[*Reads*] You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.
A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no,
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;
As doubtful whether what I say be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.
Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich;
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account; but the full sum of me
Is sum of—something, which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old

But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants and this same myself
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra. My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For I am sure you can wish none from me:
And when your honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You loved, I loved; for intermission
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.
Por. Is this true, Nerissa?
Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.
Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?
Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.
Bass. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.
Gra. But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio?

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* SALERIO, *a messenger from Venice*

Bass. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.
Por. So do I, my lord:
They are entirely welcome.
Lor. I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salerio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

Saler. I did, my lord;
And I have reason for it. Signor Antonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives Bassanio a letter*
Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.
Saler. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there
Will show you his estate.
Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger: bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salerio: what's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.
Saler. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost.
Por. There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,
That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.
Bass. O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for indeed
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,

To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary and India?
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Saler. Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man:
He plies the duke at morning and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
The duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond.

Jes. When I was with him I have heard him swear
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him: and I know, my lord,
If law, authority and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies, and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?
Bass. For me three thousand ducats.
Por. What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair thorough Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day:
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [*Reads*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I. If I might but see you at my death,—notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!
Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste: but, till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt*

Scene III. *Venice. A street*

Enter Shylock, Salarino, Antonio, *and* Gaoler

Shy. Gaoler, look to him: tell me not of mercy;
This is the fool that lent out money gratis:
Gaoler, look to him.
Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.
Shy. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond;
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
The duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.
Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.
Shy. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond. [*Exit*
Salar. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.
Ant. Let him alone:
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.
Salar. I am sure the duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.
Ant. The duke cannot deny the course of law:
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,

Will much impeach the justice of the state;
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore go:
These griefs and losses have so bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not! [*Exeunt*

SCENE IV. *Belmont. A room in Portia's house*

Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* BALTHASAR

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.
Por. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now: for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestow'd
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish misery!
This comes too near the praising of myself
Therefore no more of it; hear other things.

Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return:
There is a monastery two miles off;
And there will we abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition,
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart:
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
And so farewell, till we shall meet again.

Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.

[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo*

Now, Balthasar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua: see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the traject, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone: I shall be there before thee.

Balth. Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [*Exit*

Por. Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.
Ner. Shall they see us?
Por. They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died;
I could not do withal; then I'll repent,
And wish, for all that, I had not kill'd them;
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt*

SCENE V. *The same. A garden*

Enter LAUNCELOT, LORENZO, *and* JESSICA

Lor. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.
Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.
Lor. Good Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, sir; only "cover" is the word.

Lor. Will you cover then, sir?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit*

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

Jes. Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other, for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

Lor. I will anon: first, let us go to dinner.

Jes. Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.

Lor. No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.
Jes. Well, I 'll set you forth. [*Exeunt*

ACT IV

Scene I. *Venice. A court of justice*

Enter the Duke, *the* Magnificoes, Antonio, Bassanio, Gratiano, Salerio, *and others*

Duke. What, is Antonio here?
Ant. Ready, so please your grace.
Duke. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.
Ant. I have heard
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.
Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into court.
Saler. He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

Enter Shylock

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then 't is thought

Thou 'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant down
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Shy. I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You 'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I 'll not answer that:
But, say, it is my humour: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answer'd yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;
Some, when they hear the bag-pipe: for affection,
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat:

Why he, a woollen bag-pipe; but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?
Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.
Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answers.
Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?
Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?
Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.
Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?
Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops and to make no noise,
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do anything most hard,
As seek to soften that—than which what 's harder?—
His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no further means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.
Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.
Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.
Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?
Shy. What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,

Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them: shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer
"The slaves are ours": so do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 't is mine and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgement: answer; shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Salar. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me:
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still and write mine epitaph.

Enter NERISSA, *dressed like a lawyer's clerk*

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

Ner. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace.
[*Presenting a letter*

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.
Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou makest thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?
Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.
Gra. O, be thou damn'd, inexecrable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accused.
Thou almost makest me waver in my faith
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolvish, bloody, starved and ravenous.
Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.
Duke This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?
Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you 'll admit him.
Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.
Clerk [*Reads*] Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together:

he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation, for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

Duke. You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Enter PORTIA, *dressed like a doctor of laws*

Give me your hand. Came you from old Bellario?
Por. I did, my lord.
Duke. You are welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?
Por. I am informed throughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?
Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.
Por. Is your name Shylock?
Shy. Shylock is my name.
Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, do you not?
Ant. Ay, so he says.
Por. Do you confess the bond?
Ant. I do.
Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.
Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.
Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:

'T is mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established:
'T will be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.

Shy. A Daniel come to judgement! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!
Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.
Shy. Here 't is, most reverend doctor, here it is.
Por. Shylock, there 's thrice thy money offer'd thee.
Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.
Por. Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.
Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgement: by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.
Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgement.
Por. Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.
Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!
Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
Shy. 'T is very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.
Shy. Ay, his breast:
So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?
"Nearest his heart": those are the very words.

Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?

Shy. I have them ready.

Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?

Por. It is not so express'd: but what of that?
'T were good you do so much for charity.

Shy. I cannot find it; 't is not in the bond.

Por. You, merchant, have you anything to say?

Ant. But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I 'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.
Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.
Ner. 'T is well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.
Shy. [*Aside*] These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!
[*Aloud*] We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.
Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shy. Most rightful judge!
Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast:
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
Shy. Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare!
Por. Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are "a pound of flesh":
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.
Gra. O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned judge!
Shy. Is that the law?
Por. Thyself shalt see the act:
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.
Gra. O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!
Shy. I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice
And let the Christian go.
Bass. Here is the money.

Por. Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
He shall have nothing but the penalty.
Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!
Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.
Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.
Por. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.
Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.
Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.
Por. He hath refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.
Gra. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.
Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?
Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.
Shy. Why, then the devil give him good of it!
I 'll stay no longer question.
Por. Tarry, Jew:
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half

Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.
Gra. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself:
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.
Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.
Por. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.
Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.
Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?
Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.
Ant. So please my lord the duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,

Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.
Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.
Por. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?
Shy. I am content.
Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.
Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.
Duke. Get thée gone, but do it.
Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers;
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font. [*Exit Shylock*
Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.
Por. I humbly do desire your grace of pardon:
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.
Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.
[*Exeunt Duke and his train*
Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.
Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.
Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied
And therein do account myself well paid:
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again:
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

Bass. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further:
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.
Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[*To Ant.*] Give me your gloves, I 'll wear them for your sake;
[*To Bass.*] And, for your love, I 'll take this ring from you:
Do not draw back your hand; I 'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.
Bass. This ring, good sir,—alas, it is a trifle!
I will not shame myself to give you this.
Por. I will have nothing else but only this;
And now methinks I have a mind to it.
Bass. There 's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation:
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.
Por. I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:
You taught me first to beg; and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.
Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;
And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.
Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
An if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved this ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!
[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa*
Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.
Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring, and bring him, if thou canst,

Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste. [*Exit Gratiano*
Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio. [*Exeunt*

Scene II. *The same. A street*

Enter Portia *and* Nerissa

Por. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed
And let him sign it: we 'll away to-night
And be a day before our husbands home:
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter Gratiano

Gra. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en:
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.
Por. That cannot be:
His ring I do accept most thankfully:
And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.
Gra. That will I do.
Ner. Sir, I would speak with you.
[*Aside to Por.*] I 'll see if I can get my husband's ring,
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.
Por. [*Aside to Ner.*] Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall have old swearing
That they did give the rings away to men;
But we 'll outface them, and outswear them too.
[*Aloud*] Away! make haste: thou know'st where I will tarry.
Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?
[*Exeunt*

ACT V

Scene I. *Belmont. Avenue to Portia's house*

Enter Lorenzo *and* Jessica

Lor. The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan walls
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.
Jes. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself
And ran dismay'd away.
Lor. In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea banks, and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.
Jes. In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.
Lor. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.
Jes. In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith
And ne'er a true one.
Lor. In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jes. I would out-night you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter STEPHANO

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?
Steph. A friend.
Lor. A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?
Steph. Stephano is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont: she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.
Lor. Who comes with her?
Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?
Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter LAUNCELOT

Laun. Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!
Lor. Who calls?
Laun. Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!
Lor. Leave hollaing, man: here.
Laun. Sola! where? where?
Lor. Here.
Laun. Tell him there 's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news: my master will be here ere morning. [*Exit*
Lor. Sweet soul, let 's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter: why should we go in?
My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;

And bring your music forth into the air. [*Exit Stephano*
How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Enter Musicians

Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn:
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear
And draw her home with music. [*Music*

Jes. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive:
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;

The motions of his spirit are dull as night
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.
Ner. When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.
Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less:
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Until a king be by, and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!
Ner. It is your music, madam, of the house.
Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect:
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.
Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.
Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark
When neither is attended, and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection!
Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion
And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases*
Lor. That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.
Por. He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,
By the bad voice.
Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.
Por. We have been praying for our husbands' healths,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they return'd?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before,
To signify their coming.
Por. Go in, Nerissa;
Give order to my servants that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence;
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you. [*A tucket sounds*
Lor. Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet:
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.
Por. This night methinks is but the daylight sick;
It looks a little paler: 't is a day,
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, *and their followers*

Bass. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.
Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light;
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be Bassanio so for me:
But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord.
Bass. I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.
Por. You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.
Ant. No more than I am well acquitted of.
Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house:
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.
Gra. [*To Ner.*] By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk:
Would he were dead that had it, for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.
Por. A quarrel, ho, already! what 's the matter?

Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give to me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, "Love me, and leave me not".
Ner. What talk you of the posy or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave:
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! no, God 's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on 's face that had it.
Gra. He will, an if he live to be a man.
Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.
Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy,
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee:
I could not for my heart deny it him.
Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
And riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands;
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it,
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind cause of grief:
An 't were to me, I should be mad at it.
Bass. [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it.
Gra. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it and indeed
Deserved it too: and then the boy, his clerk,

That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine;
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.
Por. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.
Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it; it is gone.
Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By heaven, I will never be your wife
Until I see the ring.
Ner. No, nor I yours
Till I again see mine.
Bass. Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.
Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
I 'll die for 't but some woman had the ring.
Bass. No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him,
And suffer'd him to go displeased away;

Even he that did uphold the very life
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
I was enforced to send it after him;
I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honour would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For, by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.
Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.
Por. Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.
Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself—
Por. Mark you but that!
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;
In each eye, one: swear by your double self,
And there 's an oath of credit.
Bass. Nay, but hear me:
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.
Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth;
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.
Por. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.
Ant. Here, Lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.
Bass. By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!
Por. You are all amazed:
Here is a letter: read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,

Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you,
And even but now return'd: I have not yet
Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly;
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.
Ant. I am dumb.
Bass. Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?
Gra. Were you the clerk, and yet I knew you not?
Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road.
Por. How now, Lorenzo!
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.
Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.
There do I give to you and Jessica,
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.
Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.
Por. It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.
Gra. Well, while I live I 'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring. [*Exeunt*

NOTES.

Act I.—Scene I.

Time—Morning.

1. **In sooth**, truly.

Antonio's sadness, which he cannot account for, is a *presentiment* of coming misfortune.

2. **It**, *i.e.* his sadness.

3. **came by**, got.

4. These repetitions show that Antonio is speaking jokingly.

6. Sadness makes me such a senseless fellow.

ado, trouble.

8. **ocean**, three syllables.

9. **argosies**, large trading ships. (*Argosy* is a corruption of *Ragosie*, a ship made at *Ragusa*, a port in Dalmatia.)

with portly sail. The sails swelling in the wind are compared to the well-fed bodies of the "signiors and rich burghers."

10. **signiors**, nobles. (Ital. *signore*, Lat. *senior*, elder.)

burghers, townsmen.

11. **pageants of the sea.** The sea-going vessels are compared (*as it were*) to the large decorated barges used in shows, such as Shakespeare may often have seen on the Thames. *Pageant* meant (1) a scaffold on which a public show was performed, (2) the show itself. (Lat. *pagina*, scaffold, stage.)

12. **overpeer**, overlook. The huge vessels are represented as looking down with a kind of condescension on the smaller ones.

petty traffickers, small trading-ships.

13. **do them reverence.** The smaller ships seem, by their lighter movements, to bow respectfully to the heavier argosies.

14. **woven wings**, canvas sails.

15. **venture**, what is risked in foreign trade. Traders with foreign lands were in the 16th century called *merchant adventurers*.

17. **with my hopes**, with the ships on which my hope depended.

still, constantly. The word almost always has this meaning in Shakespeare.

17, 18. Judging the quarter from which the wind blows by watching the direction in which the plucked grass was carried.

19. **roads**, places where ships might *ride* at anchor some distance from the shore, as in *Yarmouth Roads*.

22–31. His *breath* disturbing the surface of his broth would remind him of stormy *winds* raising waves on the sea: the *sand* in the hour-glass would recall the dangers of *sand-banks:* the church of *stone* would suggest *rocks* and shipwrecks. This is all playful exaggeration.

23. **blow me to an ague**, chill me into a fever. In *ague* burning heat alternates with shivering cold.

25. **hour-glass**, in Shakespeare's time fixed near the pulpit in a church. So called because sand was timed to run from the upper compartment to the lower in an hour.

26. **flats**, sand-banks under water.

27. **Andrew**, ship. So called from *Andrea Doria*, a famous admiral of Genoa.

dock'd, fixed in by the sand, as a ship is held fast in *dock* by the stocks.

28. **valling**, lowering.

high-top, platform near the head of a mast.

ribs, bent timbers forming the framework of the hull.

29. **To kiss her burial, so as to** touch the sand which buries it. *Burial* = burial-place, grave.

31. **bethink me,** call to mind: reflexive verb.

straight, straightway; at once.

32. **touching but,** merely touching.

gentle vessel is a fanciful poetic expression. The rocks appear the more cruel in comparison with the "gentle vessel."

35. **but even,** "only just."

now . . . now, one moment . . . the next.

worth this, worth this much, so much, all this; an indefinite value which the actor might give point to by a gesture.

36–38. **If I can imagine all these misfortunes, can I not also imagine myself made sad if they really occurred?**

38. **bechanced,** having happened.

40. **to think,** from thinking.

42. **bottom,** merchant vessel. The cargo was, of course in the hold, the lower part of the ship.

43, 44. **nor is my whole estate Upon the fortune,** nor does my position in regard to property depend entirely on the chances.

47. **not . . . neither,** note the double negative.

50. **Janus,** Roman guardian god of gates, figured with two heads because a gate looks two ways. His principal festival was on New-Year's Day: hence the name of the month, *January*. In some representations one of the faces is old and wrinkled, the other young and laughing. Hence Salarino invokes him when speaking of the two different products of Nature.

52. **peep through their eyes,** "screw their eyes up" in laughter.

like parrots, *i.e.* senselessly, because parrots cannot know what they are laughing about.

54. **other**=others.

vinegar aspect, "sour" look. Accent *aspect* on second syllable.

56. **Nestor,** regarded as the gravest of the Grecian heroes; therefore not likely to laugh at a poor joke.

57. **comes,** singular verb referring to several subjects (*Bassanio, Gratiano,* and *Lorenzo*). This is often the case when the verb comes first.

58. **Fare ye well** means literally "May you go well." (O.E. *faran,* to go; we have it still in *ferry,* a way over a river; *welfare,* well-being; *thoroughfare,* a way for going through, &c.)

61. **prevented me,** been beforehand with me. (Lat. *prae,* before; *venire,* to come.) Salarino refers especially to the merry Gratiano.

62. Lay stress on **your.**

66. **when shall we laugh?** when shall we have some merriment together?

67. **You are becoming quite strangers;** must you really go?

68. This refers to the question *when shall we laugh?* Salarino answers: "We will arrange to be at leisure when you are." A supper was arranged; see ii. 2. 155 and 185.

74. **You take life, worldly affairs, too seriously;** you think too much of merely worldly matters.

79. **mine,** my part (is).

79. **play the fool,** play the part of Fool, a comic character often appearing in old plays.

80. **old wrinkles,** wrinkles as of old age.

82. **mortifying,** causing death. Sighs and groans were believed to drain the heart of blood.

84. **alabaster,** a fine-grained, white, crystalline rock not unlike white marble, often used in the 16th century for tombs.

85. **jaundice,** disease causing yellowness of the skin, due to a bad condition of the bile, which, like other fluids of the body, was supposed to affect the temperament.

89. The stern unsmiling faces of the men are compared to the unruffled surface of a stagnant pond, on which the green vegetable growth forms a covering like cream or a mantle.—**Cream, mantle,** nouns used as verbs.

90. **do,** *i.e.* (who) do.

a wilful stillness entertain, keep up an obstinate silence.

91. **to be dress'd in an opinion of,** to gain a reputation for.

92. **conceit,** thoughtfulness.

93. **as who should say,** as if one were

to say. *Who* here is an indefinite pronoun.

93. Sir Oracle. In Shakespeare's time the title *Sir* was often applied to men who were not knights, as a mark both of respect and of contempt; more especially to clergymen.—*Oracle*, one who speaks as a mouthpiece of a divinity, and therefore with authority.

95–99. I know people of this kind whose silence is thought a proof of wisdom, but who, if they spoke, would cause their hearers to call them fools, and so put their souls in danger. — See Matthew v. 22, "Whosoever shall say to his brother . . . Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."—The grammar is faulty. There is no object to *know*, and no subject to *would* in line 98. We must supply *they*, or read *who* for *when* in line 97.

98. damn those ears, bring into condemnation those who heard.

102. fool, foolish, noun for adjective.

gudgeon, a fish easily caught, and worthless.

108. moe, old form of *more*, used as plural.

110. for this gear, for this matter, *i.e.* on account of what you have said about silent people. (O.E. *gearwe*, things got ready, from *gearo*, ready.)

112. neat, ox or calf.

113. *i.e.* Where's the joke?

119. the same, that is, that.

123–130. You know how I have damaged my fortune by living in grand style far beyond my income. I do not complain that I have had to reduce my expenditure; my great anxiety is to clear off the debts which are the result of my extravagance.

123. disabled, rendered *unable* to bear the expenses.

124. something, somewhat.

swelling port, "showy" bearing, manner of life.

125. continuance, *i.e.* continuance *of*. Shakespeare often omitted the preposition.

128. make moan to be abridged, complain that I am cut short.

130. gaged, pledged.

132. warranty, sanction, something that *warrants*, *i.e.* justifies me.

135. it. Bassanio has spoken of "plots and purposes"; perhaps Antonio guesses that there is one great purpose, in connection with the "lady" he mentions in line 119.

136. still, constantly, as in line 17.

137. Within the eye of honour, within what I may look on as honourable. *Eye* = the field of vision.

139. occasions, pronounce as four syllables.

140. shaft, arrow.

141. his=its. *His* was once neuter as well as masculine, and *its* was not generally used until the 17th century.

fellow of the self-same flight, arrow of the same length and weight, constructed in the same way so as to have the same range.

142. advised, careful.

143. forth, out.

143. adventuring, risking. This line is two syllables too long.

144. childhood proof, experiment used in childhood.

145. pure innocence. Bassanio means that the proposal he is about to make is not devised to trick his friend: he freely acknowledges his faults and the difficulties they have brought him to.

148. another arrow, *i.e.* another loan. Bassanio keeps up the idea of the "childhood proof."

self, same.

150. as=since.

watch the aim, be more careful how I spend the money.

150, 151. or..Or, either..Or.

151. latter hazard, second loan which you risk.

154. In "beating about the bush," not going straight to the point in making your demand on my love. Antonio wishes his friend to drop his comparisons and tell him straight out what he wants.

156. In doubting my willingness to do my utmost for you.

159. That you know I *can* do.

160. prest unto it, ready for it. (O.F. *prest*, modern F. *prêt*.)

161. richly left, an orphan heiress.

163. **sometimes, at some past time**; on his former visit, see scene 2. 96–102.

164. **fair speechless messages.** Bassanio, having gone to Belmont merely in attendance upon a nobleman, had had few opportunities of talking with Portia. But she had shown her interest in him by the looks she gave him.

165. **undervalued To**, less in value than.

166. **Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.** Portia, daughter of Cato, a great Roman who lived just before Cæsar's time, was married to Brutus, afterwards one of Cæsar's assassins. She was a woman famous for great courage and virtue, and is one of the characters in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*.

169. **suitors**, men who paid *suit*, that is, sought to win her in marriage. (F. *suite*, a following, pursuit.)

170–172. Jason was son of Aeson, king of Iolcus. His uncle Pelias, who had usurped the throne, promised to give up the kingdom if Jason secured the golden fleece, which was hung on an oak at the entrance to a grove sacred to the god of war, at Colchis, on the shore of the Black Sea. Jason built the ship Argo, and set sail with some companions called the Argonauts, and after perilous adventures secured the fleece.

170. Portia's golden hair, falling in ringlets about her brow, is compared to the fleece, hanging before the sacred grove.

171. **her seat of Belmont, her mansion** called *Belmont*.

strand, shore.

172. **quest**, search. (O.F. *queste*, L. *quaesita*, p.p. of *quaerere*, to seek out.)

174. To become a suitor on equal terms with the rest.

175. **presages**, (which) foretells; omission of relative. (Lat. *prae*, beforehand; *sagire*, to perceive by the senses.)

thrift, success.

177, 178. This does not agree with line 42, "My ventures are not in one bottom trusted."

178. **commodity**, goods which could advantageously be pledged.

181. **rack'd**, stretched, strained.

182. **furnish thee to**, provide you with means to visit.

183. **presently**, at the *present* moment; at once.

184. **I no question make**, I have no doubt.

185. **of my trust or for my sake**, on my credit in business as an honourable merchant, or as a personal favour to a friend.

Lines 184, 185 form a rimed couplet, while the rest of the scene is in blank verse. It is believed that rimes were introduced at the end of a scene as a signal to the band to begin playing, and to the audience that they might leave their seats if they wished.

Act I.—Scene 2.

Time—Morning of the same day.

1. **By my troth**, a common exclamation, like our "upon my word." *Troth* = truth.

this great world. Portia's suitors came from Naples, Germany, France, England, Scotland, Morocco, and Venice.

5. **surfeit**, are overloaded.

6, 7. **It is no mean happiness..In the mean**, It is no *low degree* of happiness to be placed in the *middle*, i.e. midway between overabundant wealth and poverty. An example of pun, in which the same word is jokingly used in two different senses. (The word represents two distinct older words: (1) O.E. *mæne*, wicked; (2) O.F. *meien*, from Lat. *medius*, middle.)

7, 8. Those who are over-rich sooner show signs of age; those who are just comfortable, "in the mean," live longer.

7, 8. **comes sooner by**, sooner gets. Compare "came by it," sc. 1. line 8.

8. **competency**, property large enough to provide necessaries without over-abundance.

9. **sentences**, maxims; wise opinions.

11. **were**, the conditional mood of "to be."

12. **had been**, would have been.

13. **divine**, clergyman, minister.

14. **easier**, more easily; adj. for adverb.

15–17. Men's reason (**brain**) endeavours to control their natural disposition (**blood**); but when a man's passion is aroused, he passes the bounds set by him when coolly thinking (**cold decree**), just as a man in haste might leap over a wall that stood in his way.

17, 18. As a hare skips over the meshes of a net laid by a hunter who is slow-footed compared with the animal (**cripple**), so a rash headstrong youth lightly passes over sober, slowly-reasoned advice.

18, 19. This conversation is not of a kind to help me in choosing.

20. **whom I would**, the man whom I wish for.

21, 22. There is a pun on **will**: (1) determination; (2) written document.

23. **nor refuse none.** In modern English this would be "or refuse any," but in earlier times the double negative was common.

25. The predicate of **lottery is will never be chosen**, lines 27, 28. A *lottery* can hardly be *chosen*: the *casket* would be chosen.

27. **chooses his meaning**, chooses the one which would fulfil the intention of Portia's father.

28. **one** = by one.

who = whom.

31. **over-name**, name them one by one.

33. **level**, guess.

35. **colt**, wild rough fellow. Another instance of word-play, *colt* being literally a young horse.

36. **appropriation**, addition.

37. **parts**, qualities, powers.

38. **County Palatine**, a *count* with royal rights, or ruling over land connected with a king's *palace*.

41. **the weeping philosopher**, alluding to a wise man named Heraclitus, who wept over the follies of mankind.

42. **unmannerly**, (1) unsuitable to his age, or (2) surly.

44. **death's head**, skull and cross-bones, often carved on tombs.

46. **by**, concerning.

50. **every man in no man**, imitates everybody and has no individuality.

51. **throstle**, thrush.

falls straight a capering, immediately begins to dance. *a* = old preposition *on*, used after verbs of motion before a verbal noun.

58. Portia playfully understands *say to* literally. Nerissa meant, "What do you think of?"

60, 61. You will bear me witness that my stock of English is very small.

61. **a proper man's picture**, the picture of a handsome man.

63. **suited**, dressed.

doublet, close-fitting coat.

63, 64. **round hose**, breeches puffed out at the hips.

64. **bonnet**, head-dress; used then for a man's as well as a woman's.

In Shakespeare's time, Englishmen were distinguished for their tasteless imitations of foreign fashions. They have still the reputation of being bad talkers and linguists.

70. **became his surety**, bound himself to see the promise carried out.

sealed under, signed his name *under* that of the man he was surety for.

another, *i.e.* another box on the ear.

Portia implies that the Scotch are cowards. There is an allusion to the frequent promises of help against England which the French made to the Scotch.

73. **vilely**, badly.

76. **an**, if; a short form of *and*.

fall, happen. Portia means, if all her other suitors fail to choose aright, and she is left with only the German, she would rather be unmarried than married to him. The Teutonic races have always been noted for hard drinking.

79. **you should refuse to perform**: for *should*, we shall now say *would*.

82. **contrary**, wrong.

87. **which is.** They made up their minds singly, but all reached the same conclusion. Hence *is*.

89. **by some other sort**: either (1) in some other *manner*; or (2) by some other *lot*, from Lat. *sors*, a lot.

90. **your father's imposition**, the way *imposed* on you, set for you, by your father.

91. **Sibylla** is not really a proper name. The *Sibyls* were prophetesses in ancient Rome. Shakespeare alludes to one who was granted by Apollo the privilege of an extremely long life.

92. **Diana**, Roman huntress-goddess, never married, regarded as the type of purity.

94. **dote on**, are overjoyed at.

105. **four.** *Six* have been mentioned.

111–113. If his character is as good as is reported, yet if he is dark-complexioned, I would rather have him for a confessor than for a husband. The devil is always painted *black*.

114. **Sirrah**, fellow; used in addressing servants, and also as a mark of contempt.

115. **whiles**=whilst: it is strictly the possessive case of the noun *while*, time, used as an adverb.

Act I.—Scene 3.

Time—A little later than Scene 1.

1. **ducats.** The *ducat* (a coin so called from being issued in a *duchy*) was worth in Venice about 4*s.* 8*d.*

4. **bound, as a surety.** He would bind himself to repay the loan in three months.

6. **May you stead me?** Can you aid me? (O.E. *magan* meant *to be able.*)

pleasure me, do me the favour I ask.—Bassanio is made impatient by Shylock's cautious "well."

11. **good** (in a business sense) **solvent**, able to fulfil his pledges.

15. **in supposition**, imaginary, for they depended on the success of his foreign "ventures," which were not yet ended.

17. **the Rialto**, the meeting-place (like our Exchange) of merchants, on an island called *Rivo Alto* (high bank). (Venice is built on a number of small islands).

18. **squandered**, sent out recklessly in all directions. Shylock has no high opinion of Antonio's prudence as a man of business.

28, 29. Alluding to Christ's permitting unclean spirits to pass into the herd of swine: Matthew viii. 32.

32, 33. **he comes here**, he *that* comes here; omission of relative.

35 **fawning publican**, cringing tax-gatherer. The Jews hated the Roman tax-gatherers; a *fawning* tax-gatherer would be still more hated and despised. Shylock applies the word to Antonio because of his courteous, unobtrusive manners.

36. **for**, because; **so for that** in line 37.

37. **simplicity**, either (1) singleness, guilelessness of heart; or (2) behaviour of a simpleton.

38. **gratis, for nothing.** (Lat. *gratia*, favour.)

39. **usance**, interest.

40. **catch him upon the hip**, get him unawares into my power: a wrestler's phrase.

42. **rails . . On**, scoffs at, abuses.

43. That is, where Shylock's chances of business could be most injured by Antonio.

47. **debating of**, considering.

49. **gross**, whole amount.

52. **soft**, gently; wait a moment.

53. **Rest you fair**, a salutation.

54. **last man in our mouths**, the man we were last speaking of.

56. **excess**, interest, the sum by which the total amount *exceeds* the principal.

57. **ripe wants**, urgent needs, requiring instant satisfaction, as ripe fruit needs plucking.

58. **possessed**, informed.

59. **would**, *i.e.* would *have*, wish to have. *Will* was an independent verb, not only an auxiliary.

63. **methought**, it seemed to me. (The O.E. verb *thencan* was impersonal; there was also an active verb *thyncan.*)

64. **upon advantage**, at interest.

I do never use it, it is not my custom.

65-75. See Genesis xxx.

67. See Genesis xxvii. Rebekah suggested the trick by which Jacob supplanted Esau.

68-71. Shylock's pretended forgetfulness, and his talk about Jacob and Laban, are to gain time while he thinks of a plan of vengeance against Antonio.

71. **directly**, exactly.

72. **were compromised**, had made a mutual agreement.

73. **eanlings**, new-born lambs. (O.E. *eanian*, to bring forth.)

pied, spotted.

80. That is, was this story placed in the Bible as a defence of interest?

81. **is**, singular verb, because **gold and silver**=money; so *it* in next line. See note on I. 1. 57.

82. **breed.** Money increasing by interest is compared to the increase of a flock by breeding.

83. **note me, signior.** Antonio pays no attention to Shylock's request, but turns his back and speaks insultingly of the Jew to Bassanio. Shylock meanwhile pretends to be calculating the rate of interest, while he is really planning his revenge.

84. Now a common proverb, suggested by Matthew iv. 4-6, where the devil quotes Scripture in his temptation of Christ.

91. **beholding**=beholden, obliged.

92. **many a time and oft**, an instance of *tautology*, *i.e.* saying a thing over again. *Oft* means *many a time*.

95. **still**, constantly.

96. Patient endurance is our distinguishing mark. **tribe** means here the whole race of Jews, who were persecuted and plundered in Christian countries, as recently in Russia.

98. **gaberdine**, long smock-frock of coarse cloth. (Span. *gabardina*.)

99. **for use**, because I use.

101. **Go to**, come, consider.

103. **void your rheum.** discharge your spittle.

104. **foot**, kick.

109. **in a bondman's key**, in the whining tones of a slave.

110. **bated**, weakened, lessened.

In this speech Shylock has been gradually showing more and more anger and resentment, though it is necessary for his purpose of revenge that he should seem to keep on good terms with the insolent Christian. Just as he is on the point of losing his control ("you call'd me dog") he remembers, and restrains himself, and with an ironical bow calls the insults "courtesies."

116. **like**, likely.

119, 120. When did a friend take of his friend money that has proceeded (a breed, *i.e.* interest) from money lent (metal), seeing that money, being lifeless metal, cannot naturally increase (barren) as animals do?

122. **who if he break.** There is no verb to *who*. It may, perhaps, be regarded as put for *whom*, and objective after *exact the penalty*.

break, break his agreement, fail to repay the loan.

125. **shames**, shameful charges.

126. **doit**, half a farthing. (A Dutch word.)

128. **This is kind I offer**, this offer of mine is a friendly one.

were, conditional (subjunctive mood), *would be*.—Bassanio can scarcely believe his ears when the Jew agrees to lend money without interest, and probably begins to suspect Shylock's good faith. *Were* is the word to lay stress on.

130. **notary**, official who draws up and certifies deeds, &c.

seal me. *Me* is called *ethic dative*, *i.e.* the dative case of the pronoun standing for the person interested in the action expressed by the verb. It is also used in a playful way.

131. **your single bond**, agreement signed by you *alone*, without sureties.

131-137. Shylock uses legal language, but speaks rapidly and in the pleasant tones of his previous speech.

134. **condition**, agreement.

135. Stated as exactly a pound of your flesh.

138. **content, I' faith, an exclamation** of acceptance. Antonio is surprised at what he thinks easy terms. He is so guileless himself that he does not suspect Shylock, as Bassanio does.

141. **dwell,** remain, continue.

142. **will, shall.**

teaches, sing. verb with plural noun. (Perhaps this is a remnant of the old Northern dialect plural *-es*.)

147. **suspect.** *i.e. to* suspect. *To* was omitted, as it is after auxiliary verbs, because at one time there was confusion as to what were and what were not auxiliary verbs.

154. **extend,** hold out, offer.

156. **for my love,** for my love's sake.

160. **purse,** count into bags.

161. **in the fearful guard,** under the charge of a careless fellow, about which I am full of anxiety.

162. **knave,** fellow, servant. (O.E. *cnafa*, boy.)

presently, immediately. Shylock is in a hurry to get his revengeful bond sealed.

163. **Hie thee,** hasten. A *reflexive* use.

Act II.—Scene I.

Time—Same day, immediately after Act I. Scene 2.

1. **mislike,** dislike.

2, 3. He compares his dusky skin to a dark-coloured dress (shadow'd livery) furnished him by the bright sun.

3. **Morocco,** in N. Africa, is on the border of the torrid zone.

5. **Phœbus' fire,** the sun. *Phœbus* was the Roman sun-god.

6. **make incision,** make a cut in the body.

6, 7. It was the custom, in the East, for lovers to show the sincerity of their love by cutting themselves. Also courage was believed to be connected with blood specially deep in colour, just as a coward was said to have a white liver.

8. **aspect,** look: accent on second syllable.

9. **fear'd,** made to fear, frightened.

10. **best-regarded,** most highly thought of.

11, 12. Unless by a disguise I might steal your affections.

13. **In terms of choice,** with regard to the conditions on which I may choose.

14. **nice, fanciful.**

16. **Barr me,** shuts up against me, deprives me of. A preposition is omitted: see i. 1. 125.

17. **scanted me,** given me little freedom.

18. **hedged me by his wit,** by his cleverness in planning set conditions that confine and protect me like a hedge.

19 **His wife who,** wife of him who.

20. **stood,** would have stood.

as fair . . . for my affection, in as good a position . . . with respect to gaining my love. There is also a reference to his complexion in *fair*. Portia could well say this, for she cared for none of her suitors.

24. **scimitar,** curved sword with a broad point, used in the East.

25. **the Sophy,** the Shah of Persia, of whom *Sofi*, meaning wise man, was a common title.

26. Who defeated Sultan Solyman in three battles.

Sultan Solyman, Solyman the Magnificent, a Turkish sultan who made an unsuccessful campaign against the Persians in 1535.

31. **alas the while!** an exclamation expressing sorrow at the present circumstances.

32. **Hercules and Lichas.** *Hercules* (therefore called **Alcides**), son of Alcæus, was a Greek hero possessed of enormous strength. When quite a babe he strangled snakes that came into his cradle. *Lichas* was his page. The point is that Hercules might be beaten by his page at a game of dice, though really he was far superior; indeed, so strong that once in a fit of rage he dashed

Lichas to pieces. So, the Prince of Morocco says, he, though a famous and victorious warrior, may be beaten at this lottery by a far meaner man.

40. wrong=wrongly, adj. for adverb.

42. be advised, consider well what you do.

43. Nor will not, *i.e.* will never seek another wife. See note on i. 1. 47.

44. the temple, the church where the oath was to be taken.

Act II.—Scene 2.

Time—A week or perhaps a fortnight after i. 3. Afternoon.

Enter **Launcelot.** — The "unthrifty knave" whom Shylock left in charge of his house. He is the chief "comic" character of the play.

7. scorn running with thy heels, despise running away. The idea is of an animal kicking up its heels against an object it despises.

9. pack, be off. (Literally *pack up* in readiness to go: we still say 'send him packing.')

Via! away! begone! (Italian).

10. for the heavens, for heaven's sake.

11. hanging about the neck of my heart. His conscience tries to restrain his wishes, as one person clings to the neck of another to prevent him going.

14, 15. did something smack, something grow to, had something dishonourable in his character. *Grow to* was applied to milk burnt at the bottom of a saucepan, and so having an unpleasant taste and being spoilt. (O.E. *smæc*, taste.)

19, 20. God bless the mark. A kind of apology for mentioning the devil. **So is saving your reverence.** Launcelot, apparently talking to himself, is of course indirectly addressing the spectators.

23. incarnal, *incarnate*, in the flesh. Launcelot and his father love long words, but ludicrously mangle and misuse them. (Lat. *in; caro, carnis*, flesh.)

29. true-begotten, of course wrongly applied to a father.

30. sand-blind, half-blind. (*Sand*, a corruption of O.E. *sam*=Lat. *semi*.) There is also a reference to a man being blinded by dust in his eyes.

high-gravel-blind, more than **half-blind,** because gravel is larger than sand—a comical compound word invented by Launcelot.

31. confusions. Try *conclusions* (*i.e.* experiments) is the proper phrase. Launcelot blunders, but *confusions* is fitting, because he tries to confuse his father.

35. marry, Mary, an oath.

38. By God's sonties, an oath. *Sonties* is either a corruption of *sanctities*, or of *saintes*, an old plural of *saint*, pronounced as two syllables.

42. raise the waters, either (1) raise a storm (*i.e.* make him excited), or (2) make him weep.

46. well to live, of good life.

47. a'=he.

50. ergo, therefore (Latin); **but** Launcelot does not know what it means.

52. an't=*an it*, if it.

54. father. Old men were often called *father* by young men: hence Gobbo does not suspect Launcelot to be his son.

55. Sisters Three, the three Fates, the goddesses of the Greeks, who controlled man's birth, life, and death.

60. hovel-post, the prop of the roof of a shed.

63. God rest, may God give rest to. *Rest* is ordinarily intransitive, or reflexive.

73. Launcelot kneels with his back to his father, who mistakes his back hair for a beard; see line 84.

85. fill-horse, cart-horse. The *fills* or *thills* are the shafts of a cart.

88. of=*on;* the two words are often interchanged.

93. set up my rest, made up my mind: a phrase used in an old card-game.

94. run some ground=run *over* some ground.

98. **me.** See note on i 3. 130.

103. Bassanio is speaking to a servant as he enters.

104. **of the clock,** contracted to *o'clock.* In Shakespeare's time meals were early: dinner at 11, for instance.

106. **anon,** at once.

109. **Gramercy!** corruption of Fr. *grand merci,* great thanks.

112. **specify,** Launcelot's mistake for *certify;* assure.

113. **infection,** mistake for *affection.*

118. **are scarce cater-cousins,** are hardly on speaking terms. (Supposed to be derived from F. *quatre-cousin,* a fourth cousin, distant relation.)

121. **frutify,** for certify.

124. **impertinent,** he means *pertinent,* concerning.

129. **defect,** for *effect.*

132. **preferr'd,** recommended for promotion.

135. **old proverb,** only preserved in the Scottish form, "The grace o' God is gear (wealth) enough."

141. **guarded,** trimmed with braid.

142. **I cannot get a service.** Launcelot means that he can. All through this speech he speaks ironically, that is, meaning the opposite of what he says. Shylock, in finding fault with his "unthrifty knave," has no doubt told him that no other master would have him, that he would never live long or get a wife, &c.

143, 145. The sentence is incomplete. Launcelot breaks off at the word **table,** which reminds him of a man putting his hand on the Bible as he takes his oath in a law-court.

144. **table,** palm of the hand.
which doth offer, &c., which says as certainly as a man on his oath that I shall have good fortune. Palmistry was the science of telling fortunes by examining the lines of the hand.

145. **simple, he means the opposite,** *good.*

147. **coming-in,** allowance.

150. **for this gear,** for this matter. See note on i. 1. 110.

154. **orderly bestow'd,** set in their proper places.

163. Notice that Bassanio first uses *you* in addressing Gratiano, then *thee.* The second person singular of the pronoun was in Shakespeare's time used among friends, in addressing servants, and in anger to strangers. Bassanio first uses the ordinary *you;* then, when he gives some friendly advice to Gratiano, he adopts a more familiar tone, and uses *thee.*

167, 168. **show Something too liberal,** appear somewhat too free.

168. **Pray thee, I beg you;** often spelt *Prithee.*
pain, usually pains.

169, 170. **To allay . . . skipping spirit.** Gratiano's skipping spirit (*i.e.* lively disposition) is compared to something too hot, which needs cooling.

171. **misconstrued,** misjudged.

173. **habit,** behaviour.

174. **with respect,** seriously.
but, only.

176. **hood,** cover.

178–180. Observe all the customs of refinement like a good boy who has carefully trained himself to appear grave in manner, in order to please his grandmother.

179. **ostent,** appearance. (Lat. *ostendere,* to show.)

181. **bearing,** behaviour.

182. **bar,** except, leave out.
gauge, measure, judge.

185. A merry bearing is compared to a suit of clothes, which may be put on and off.

188. **must,** *i.e.* must *go.* The verb of motion is often thus omitted.

Act II.—Scene 3.

Time—The same day, a little later.

2. **Our house is hell.** Shylock is therefore as unpleasant in his home-life as in his business relations. Launcelot had called him the devil in the previous scene.

3. **tediousness, wearisomeness.** Jessica, being the daughter of a hated Jew, is shut out from all the pleasures which other girls might enjoy. And Shylock is too mean to

entertain company belonging to his own race.

10. **exhibit**, for *inhibit*, prevent. He pretends that he cannot speak for weeping.

11. **pagan**, heathen. (Lat. *paganus*, countryman. Christianity affected the towns first, and people in country places were ignorant of it. Hence the use of the word meaning "countryman" to mean "one not a Christian.")

14. **heinous**, hateful (O.F. *haïnos*, from *haïr*, to hate.)

16, 17. I am his daughter by birth, but I have nothing of my father's character.

18. **strife**, between duty to Shylock and love for Lorenzo; Jessica is also troubled by the differences between the faith she has been brought up in and the faith she will have to adopt as Lorenzo's wife.

Act II.—Scene 4.

Time—The same day, four o'clock.

Gratiano and his friends have arranged a masque as a farewell entertainment to their friend Bassanio.

5. **spoke us yet of**, bespoke for ourselves, made arrangements with. Torch-bearers were a necessary part of every troop of masquers.

6. **quaintly order'd**, gracefully arranged. (*Quaint* was supposed to be derived from Lat. *comptus*, adorned, through F. *coint*. It really comes from *cognitus*, well-known.)

7. That is, "and it would be better if it were not undertaken."

10. **break up**, open.

12. **hand**, handwriting. We still say, "he writes a fair hand." Lorenzo plays on the word in line 14.

14. **writ**, wrote.

22. **prepare you**, prepare *yourselves*; reflexive.

masque, an entertainment of which acting and dancing formed part, the guests and performers being masked.

23. **provided of**. Shakespeare often used *of* where we should use *with* or another preposition.

35–37. Let misfortune never dare stand in her way except under the excuse (for Jessica herself deserves no ill fortune) that she is a Jew's daughter. *She* in line 36 refers to Misfortune personified; *she* in line 37 to Jessica.

37. **faithless**, without faith, unbelieving; now it means not keeping faith.

38. **peruse**, read over carefully.

Act II.—Scene 5.

Time—The same day, between four and five.

3. **What, Jessica!** Shylock raises his voice and calls his daughter.

gormandise, eat like a gourmand, a glutton. Shylock speaks as though it was pleasant to be in his service: Launcelot has a different opinion. (F. *gourmand*, glutton.)

8. **wont**, accustomed.

11. **bid forth**, invited out.

14. Shylock said in i. 3, "I will not eat with you." He goes now so that the suspicious Bassanio may believe him to be sincere in his profession of friendliness.

16. **right loath**, very unwilling.

17. **a-brewing**, preparing, *a* = O.E *on*, and was originally used before verbal nouns formed from verbs of motion.

towards my rest, that will affect my rest.

18. **to-night**, last night.

20. **reproach**. Launcelot means *approach*; Shylock in his **So do** his takes it literally, blame.

24. **Black Monday**, Easter Monday, so called because on that day, April 14, 1360, when Edward III. was besieging Paris, many of his soldiers died through the bitter cold.

26. **was four year, four years ago.**—Launcelot has his presentiments, but his dates and his memory generally are rather confused.

29. **wry-neck'd fife,** a curved kind of fife. Or *fife* may here mean the *player*, who turns his neck awry as he plays.

30. **casements,** window frames.

32. **varnish'd,** painted; or it may refer to the small black masks.

35. **Jacob's staff,** a common name for a pilgrim's staff. See Genesis xxxii. 10, where Jacob says, "with my staff I passed over this Jordan." St. James (*Jacobus* is Latin for *James*), the patron of pilgrims, is represented as holding a staff.

36. **of.** See note on ii. 4. 23.

42. **a Jewess' eye.** A play on the common expression, "worth a Jew's eye." Money was often extorted from Jews by torture; the saying expressed the sum which a Jew would pay rather than lose an eye.

43. **Hagar's offspring.** Hagar, one of Abraham's wives, was driven away into the wilderness with her son Ishmael. Hence the name *Ishmaelite* or *son of Hagar* as a name for outcasts and a term of reproach.

45. **patch,** fool; so called either from the patched appearance of a jester's particoloured coat, or from Ital. *pazzo*, a fool.

46. **snail-slow in profit, slow as a** snail as far as usefulness in my business is concerned.

47. **the wild-cat** sleeps nearly all day, seeking its prey at night. It was common in Shakespeare's time, but is now only rarely found in remote parts of Scotland.

53. **fast,** firm.

55. **crost,** crossed, interfered with.

Act II.—Scene 6.

Time—The same day, just before 9 p.m.

1. **pent-house,** sloping roof, projecting into the street. (Once spelt *pentice;* from Lat. *pendere*, to hang.)

3. **out-dwells, out-stays,** delays beyond.

5. **Venus' pigeons,** properly doves, which draw the chariot of Venus, the Roman goddess of love.

7. To keep promises already made.—The meaning is, young people just in love are readier to make promises than they afterwards are to keep them.

obliged = pledged.

9. **sits down, sits down *with*.** See note on i. 1. 125.

10. **untread again,** retrace.

11. **tedious measures,** space marked out for him, which become tedious, wearisome, on the return journey.

12. **are,** exist.

14. **younker,** young man. (Dutch *jong*, young; *heer*, sir.)

15. **scarfed,** decked with flags.

puts from, puts off from.

16. **Favoured by the wind.**

strumpet wind, the wind that favours many ships, and is false to them all (because it does damage)

17. Allusion to the Prodigal Son Luke xv. 11–32.

18. **over-weather'd,** weather-beaten.

ribs; see note on i. 1. 28.

This speech is unusually serious for the merry Gratiano.

21. **your patience, I ask your pardon.**

abode, delay.

27. **albeit,** although.

28. **love,** lover.

30. **who,** whom.

35. **exchange,** of clothing.

38. **Cupid,** son of Venus. His arrows were supposed to fill people with love, causing them to commit follies at which he laughed. But even Cupid would blush with shame at this folly of Jessica's.

42. **good sooth,** in good truth.

light, a play on *light* as of a candle, and *light* in the sense of gay, wanton.

43. **office of discovery,** duty that will tend to reveal me

44. **obscured,** hidden.

So you are. Lorenzo plays on

the word *obscured;* **he takes it to mean disguised.**

45. garnish, dress.

47. The time of complete darkness is fast passing away. **close** here means either (1) completely shut, as in "draw the curtains close," or (2) secret.

48. stay'd, waited.

49. gild. Another pun. Jessica means provide herself with gold, with a reference to the meaning of *gild* as *adorn, beautify.*

51. by my hood. Gratiano was probably disguised as a friar, and intends a kind of pun on *hood* as in *manhood, &c. By my knighthood* was a common oath.

gentile, a pun on *gentle.*

52. Beshrew, curse.

but = if I do not.

63. nine o'clock. The dinner was to be at five, and the masque at six.

64. is come about, has changed.

65. presently, immediately.

67. on't, of it.

Act II.—Scene 7.

Time—Afternoon of the same day as Scene 1.

1. discover, uncover.

2. several, different.

4. who, which: *who* is now used only for persons, *which* for things and animals.

8. as blunt. The motto is as pointless as lead itself.

12. withal, with it.

14. back again, in reverse order.

20. golden. The prince has a high opinion of himself.

shows, appearances.

dross, properly the impurities separated from ores of metals; thus any worthless thing.

21. nor . . . nor, neither . . . nor.

22. virgin, white, as a sign of purity.

25. even, just.

26. rated, *i.e.* by others—if you are taken by others at your own estimate of yourself.

30. disabling. See note on i. 1. 123.

36. graved, cut, carved.

40. mortal breathing saint, saint while still living. Persons are recognized as saints usually after death. Portia was so good as to deserve, in the prince's opinion, that name while still alive.

41. Hyrcanian deserts, south-east of the Caspian Sea, supposed to be full of tigers.

vasty, vast.

42. throughfares, ways one may go through. Now spelt *thoroughfare.* (O.E. *faran,* to go: hence *fare,* the money paid for a journey.)

43. view. *To* is omitted: see note on i. 3. 147. In modern English we say "come and see."

44. ambitious head, wave that rises high as though with ambition.

46. spirits, courageous men.

49. like, likely.

damnation, ruinous to my hopes, and a sin in itself.

50, 51. it were . . . cerecloth, it would be too common to inclose (as the ribs inclose the body) her shroud.

51. cerecloth, wax-cloth, shroud, the dress of a dead person. (Lat. *cera,* wax.)

obscure, dark.

52. immured, shut up, as within walls (Lat. *murus,* wall).

53. undervalued, see note on i. 1. 165. In 1600 gold was worth ten times as much as silver.

56. Coin called the *angel,* worth 10*s.*

57. insculp'd upon. The figure of St. Michael piercing the dragon was so cut as to stand out above the surface of the coin.

60. thrive I as I may, let my success be what it will.

63. A carrion Death, a skull, from which the flesh had rotted away.

68. but, merely, only.

71. Though young in limbs, yet old in wisdom.

73. is cold, is coldly received.

77. part, depart.

Act II.—Scene 8.

Time—The morning after Scene 6.

Shylock has discovered his daughter's flight, and appears to suspect Bassanio of having had a hand in it.

4. **raised**, aroused.

8. **gondola**, a kind of boat very common in Venice, where people go from place to place by water, the only streets being canals.

9. **amorous**, loving.

12. **passion**, outcry.

15–22. Shylock is more distressed for the loss of his money than for that of his daughter.

25. **look he keep his day**, take care to be ready with the money on the day arranged.

27. **reason'd**, talked.

29. **miscarried**, was wrecked.

30. **richly fraught**, with a valuable cargo.

33. **You were best**, *you had better*, as we should say.

37, 38. **make some speed . . . return**, somewhat hasten his return.

38–49. This passage gives us a wonderful picture of the affectionate, unselfish character of Antonio.

39. **Slubber**, slur over, hurry.

40. Wait until time has fully ripened your purposes.

41. **for**, as for, in regard to.

42. **mind of love**, loving mind.

44. **To**, in.

ostents, see note on ii. 2. 179.

45. **conveniently**, fittingly.

46. **even there**, *i.e.* even in public, or perhaps "at that point."

48. Showing himself of very sensitive feelings.

50. That is, if it were not for his affection for Bassanio, Antonio would have no pleasure in life.

52. **quicken**, enliven.

his embraced heaviness, sadness which has such a hold on him that he appears to cling to it.

Act II.—Scene 9.

Time—The day after Scene 8.

1. **straight**, immediately, at once.

3. **election**, choice.

6. **nuptial rites**, wedding ceremony.

10. **unfold**, disclose, tell.

18. **hazard**, the chance of choosing.

19. **address'd me**, prepared myself.

25, 26. **meant By**, intended to refer to.

27. **fond**, foolish.

28. **martlet**, house-martin, which builds its nest under the eaves of a house. *let* is a diminutive ending.

29. **in the weather**, exposed to the weather.

30. Even in the way of accidents, and where they are likely to be most violent.

32. **jump**, agree.

33. **me** = myself.

barbarous, uncivilized, not polite.

37. **go about**, seek.

38. **cozen**, cheat.

In lines 41–43 Shakespeare no doubt expressed the feeling of many Englishmen with regard to corruption in high places. This feeling broke out twenty odd years later in the prosecution of Lord Bacon for taking bribes.

41. **estates, degrees**, ranks, titles.

42. **derived**, obtained.

clear, bright, unspotted (Lat. *clarus*).

43. **purchased** implies that honours were sometimes bought with money.

44. How many would then wear their hats as masters, who now stand bareheaded as servants!

46–49. How many men, as base in character and descent as the lowest peasants, would then be removed (glean'd) from the position they wrongfully hold among those who

are really honourable in character and birth (**true seed of honour**)! How many really honourable men would then be rescued from the position to which they had fallen by misfortune among classes which are now regarded as no better than chaff and rubbish (**ruin**), and would be set up again with all the outward signs of rank!

51. **desert**, that I am deserving.

55. **schedule**, small written roll of parchment.

61, 62. The same man cannot be an offender, and the judge in his own case.

61. **distinct**, accent on first syllable.

68. **I wis.** This is really O.E. *ywis*, certainly; but came to be regarded as the first person of a verb meaning "to know."

69. **so was this**, in the casket.

71. **I**, *i.e.* the fool's head.

72. **sped**, done with.

74. **By**, in proportion to.

80. **deliberate**, careful in making up their mind.

81. They are so clever in their reasonings that they show themselves to be *too* clever and fail. And they are wise after all, for I do not care for them.

82. **heresy**, false teaching.

83. **goes**: singular verb with two nouns.

85. **my lord.** Portia playfully gives her servant a title corresponding to the one he had used. She was on good terms with her servants.

89. **sensible regrets**, substantial greetings: *sensible*, plain to the senses (of sight and touch).

90. **To wit**, namely.

commends, salutations, compliments.

courteous breath, polite verbal messages.

91. **yet**, as yet, up to now.

92. One whose appearance as an ambassador promises so well for the suitor who sent him. **likely**, promising.

94. **costly**, rich (in fruits, &c.). (Perhaps *costly* should be *closely*.)

95. **fore-spurrer**, fore-runner, rider in advance.

98. **high-day**, elegant (as though the servant's wit was dressed in holiday clothes).

100. **post**, speedy messenger. News was carried by messengers, who stopped to change horses at fixed stations (*posts*) on the way.

101. **Lord Love**, Cupid. — Nerissa means, "I hope it will turn out to be Bassanio."

Act III.—Scene I.

Time—About 11 weeks after the opening scene of the play.

2. **It lives there uncheck'd**, the report is still going about uncontradicted.

5. **carcases.** The wrecked ships are compared to dead bodies.

6 **gossip Report**, Report, my talkative acquaintance. *Report* is personified as a familiar friend of Salarino's. Or *my gossip* may be playfully used as a title like *my lady*. (O.E. *godsib*, related to God. The word originally meant a sponsor in baptism.)

9. **knapped**, snapped, broke into pieces. Old people were fond of eating ginger.

11. **prolixity**, "long-windedness."

crossing the plain highway of talk. Telling a story is compared to walking along a road. Salanio says he will tell his story straightforwardly, without wandering from side to side.

14. **the full stop.** Salanio is not keeping his word. Salarino tells him to finish his story.

24. **wings**, *i.e.* the disguise. **withal**, strong form of *with*, used thus at the end of a sentence; see line 41. Salarino is making game of the Jew

26. **complexion**, nature. It is the nature of young birds when fledged to leave the parents' nest.

31. **Rhenish**, a white wine; so called because made in the part of Germany through which the Rhine (Lat. *Rhenus*) flows.

32. **match**, bargain.

35. smug, daintily dressed, looking pleased with himself. (*Smug* originally meant dressed, being connected with *smock*, a garment *crept into*, from O.E. *smeógan*, to creep.)

43. half a million, from gaining half a million ducats.

44. thwarted, hindered.

46. organs, such as the heart, the eyes, &c.

dimensions, size and shape.

54. what is his humility? Humility, meekness, is one of the virtues of a truly Christian man. Shylock asks what meekness does a Christian show if he is wronged?

55. sufferance, patient endurance.

69. Frankfort, in Germany. Then famous for its fairs.

curse, the evils foretold in Scripture against the Jews. — Shylock argues that the curse never fell till now because *he* had never felt it. Notice how this fine touch shows the selfishness of the man.

71. that, the diamond.

73. hearsed, in a hearse on the way to burial.

74. so, so much for that.

77. no ill luck stirring, &c. Shylock is impatient to hear that misfortune has fallen on Antonio, but so far the only misfortune has been his own.

83. Tripolis; see i. 3. 17. Tripoli is in N. Africa.

90. Notice how Tubal works on Shylock's feelings. First he makes him happy by telling of Antonio's losses, then plunges him into grief with his tale of Jessica's extravagance.

93. divers, several.

94. cannot choose but break, cannot help becoming bankrupt.

100. turquoise, precious stone of blue colour, found in east Persia. It was supposed to preserve love between man and wife.

Leah, his dead wife.

102. undone, ruined.

103. fee me an officer, arrange with an officer to be ready to arrest Antonio as soon as the bond becomes due.

107. synagogue, Jewish place of worship.

Act III.—Scene 2.

Time—A fortnight after Scene 1.

4. but it is not love. Portia will modestly await the result of Bassanio's choice before she actually confesses her love. And yet her whole speech expresses it.

6. Hatred does not give advice of such a kind as that which I have just now given you.

8. And yet, even if you stay long, you will not understand me, for whatever thoughts a maiden may have, she may not express them.

11. forsworn, guilty of breaking my oath. Portia had promised (her father perhaps) not to reveal the secret of the caskets.

15. o'erlook'd, bewitched.

16. Portia would prettily make a slight pause before the second **yours.**

18. naughty, wicked.

20. though yours, not yours; *i.e.* yours in love, but not yet in right.

20, 21. If it prove so, that I, who am yours in love, am not yours through your choosing the wrong casket, then Fortune ought to be punished and not I.—She means that it would be a *hell* to her to live without Bassanio now that she loved him.

22. peize, weigh down, make the time pass heavily, slowly. (Fr. *peser.*)

23. eke, lengthen.

25. upon the rack. Bassanio compares his feelings, in his uncertainty, to the sufferings of a man stretched on the rack, the wooden frame on which prisoners were tortured in order to make them confess their crime. Traitors especially were tortured. — Notice how from the very beginning Portia teases Bassanio.

29. fear the enjoying, doubt whether I shall enjoy.

30, 31. Snow and fire might as well be expected to remain together

like friends, as my love with any treasonable thoughts.

33. In order to end their torture, tortured men often made any statements, true or false, which they thought would be acceptable to their persecutors.

36. had = would have.

39. let me to, let me *go* to; omission of verb of motion.

42. aloof, at a distance. (*a* = O.E. *on; loof* from Dutch *loef*, the side of a ship towards the wind.)

43. Another mark of Portia's good wishes. The Princes of Morocco and Arragon were not favoured with music.

44. a swan-like end. Swans were believed to sing just before their death.

45. fading, disappearing.

46. That is, Portia will weep.

49. flourish, the blast of trumpets sounded when the crown is placed on the sovereign's head.

51. dulcet, sweet. (Lat. *dulcis*, sweet.)

51–53. This passage refers to the custom of the musicians, who were hired for the wedding, waking the bridegroom in the early morning: they afterwards accompanied him to the house of the bride.

54. presence, handsome appearance.

55–57. When Laomedon was building Troy, he promised Apollo and Neptune a certain sum for their help. On the completion of the work Laomedon refused to pay up, so Apollo sent a plague, a flood, and a sea-monster against the land. The oracle said that the only way of putting an end to the plague and the flood was to sacrifice Laomedon's daughter Hesione to the monster. Hercules (Alcides, see note to ii. 1. 32) promised to rescue Hesione in return for a present of horses; he did so, but did not get the horses.—The words *with much more love* in line 54 refer to the fact that it was not for love, because he felt none, but for the sake of the reward, that Hercules rescued Hesione.

57. I stand for sacrifice, like Hesione.

58. Dardanian, another name for Trojan, of Troy.
wives, women. (O.E. *wif* meant woman.)

59. bleared visages, eyes bloodshot, and faces disfigured with weeping.

61. Live thou, if you live.

62. fray, fight. Bassanio going to make his choice is likened to Hercules going to fight the monster.

63. fancy, love. The song is perhaps intended to warn Bassanio against choosing merely by appearances.

67. engender'd, made to exist.

73. During the music Bassanio has been thinking. Now he speaks his thought: the outward appearance may be very unlike the real things.

74. still, constantly.

75–77. A bad case in law may be made to appear good by the eloquence of counsel.

76. season'd. The lawyer's pleasing (gracious) voice puts out of sight the badness of the plea, as sauces and condiments cover up the bad taste of tainted meat.

78. some sober brow, some grave-looking person.

79. approve, justify,

80. grossness, greatness of the error

81. simple, thorough, out and out (*Simple* means properly 'one-fold' Lat. *simplex*.)

82. his = its.

83. all, altogether.

85. Mars, God of War.

86. livers white as milk; see note on ii. 1. 7.

87, 88. These put on the beard, the mark of manliness, only in order to make themselves feared. excrement = excrescence, outgrowth (Lat. *ex*, out; *crescere*, to grow.)

91. lightest, a pun on *light* in weight, and *light* in the sense of worthless.

92. crisped, close-curled.
snaky in appearance; also deceitful

93. Which wave in the wind as though they are merrily playing with it.

94. Upon supposed fairness, placed on what appears beautiful, but is not. — Referring to the made-up complexions of some of the court ladies.

95. dowry, gift bestowed on a woman on her marriage.

96. in, *i.e.* being in.

92–96. Old writers often denounced the fashion of wearing false light-

coloured hair, which was set by Queen Elizabeth herself.

97. guiled, treacherous, deceitful.

99. an Indian beauty, *i.e.* a dark-coloured woman, who, though a beauty in her own land, would not be considered beautiful by an Englishman.

102. Midas was the fabled king of Phrygia who, being allowed by the god Bacchus to ask any favour he pleased, begged that all that he touched might be changed to gold. But when even his food and drink changed to gold, he feared to die of starvation, and begged that the power might be removed.

103. drudge, slave; because silver was the metal most used for coins.

104. meagre, poor in appearance and value.

108. fleet, fly away, vanish.

109. rash-embraced despair, despair that is felt rashly, without sufficient cause.

111. ecstasy, great feeling.

114. surfeit, have too much.

15. counterfeit, portrait.

117. Being impressed on my eyeballs and moving with them.

119, 120. Notice the alliteration (the beginning of several words with the same letter): "sugar breath: so sweet a bar should sunder such sweet."

122. mesh, net.

126. unfurnish'd, unprovided with a fellow.

127. shadow, the picture.

130. continent, that which contains.

136. hold, consider.

140. I come as directed by the paper, to give a kiss and to receive the lady.

141. prize, struggle for a prize.

148. ratified, settled.

157. livings, estates.

159. to term in gross, to state at its full value.

168. but now, a moment ago.

170. even now, but now, at this present moment.

172–175. The giving of the ring, so natural and unforced an incident, has an important bearing on the end of the play.

174. presage, foretell.

175. Be the ground on which I can base unanswerable complaints against you.

176. bereft, robbed.

176, 177. My joy is too great for words, but makes my heart beat faster.

182–184. Where all the exclamations being mingled (blent) together, become one wild chorus in which nothing can be distinguished but joy, and that is expressed only in the general sound, and not in clear words.

192. You are so happy that you will not wish to deprive me of any happiness.

196. so, provided that.

200. intermission, delay. Gratiano means that as Bassanio had very quickly fallen in love with Portia on his previous visit, so *he* had just as quickly loved Nerissa when he saw her.

202. stood, depended.

203. as the matter falls, as it turns out.

204. Remember that Gratiano is the great talker, who says "an infinite deal of nothing."

205. roof, of the mouth.

206. if promise last, if the promise is kept. Note the pun.

208–209. your fortune Achieved, you were fortunate enough to win.

212. faith, in faith, truly.

213. shall, will.

214. infidel, Jessica, who, being a Jewess, did not believe in the Christian religion.

217, 218. Bassanio is modestly doubting whether his position is of long-standing enough to warrant him in welcoming his friends to Portia's house.

219. very, true. (Lat. *verus*, true.)

232. estate, condition.

235. royal, kingly in wealth and estimation.

237. See note to i. 1. 172.

239. shrewd, evil.

242. constitution, temper of mind.

243. constant, even-minded.

254. braggart, boaster.

258. mere, out and out.
engaged, pledged.

259. **To feed my means**, to increase my money.

260. **as**, like.

262. **issuing**, sending forth.

263. **hit**, succeeded.

265. **Barbary**, the Barbary states in the north of Africa.

267. **merchant-marring**, causing ruin to merchants.

269. **discharge**, pay his debt to.

272. **confound**, ruin.

273. **plies**, presses with petitions.

274. And denies that there is free justice for all parties in Venice.

276. **magnificoes**, nobles.

277. **port**, importance.

persuaded, argued.

278. **envious**, malicious.

285. **deny**, forbid.

289. **best-condition'd**, best natured.

unwearied, *i.e. most* unwearied: we have to supply a superlative from *best*.

292. **any**, *i.e. in* any one.

294. **For me**, on my account.

295–310. Portia will not come between her husband and his friend, but is eager for Bassanio to hasten to help him. Like Antonio, she is unselfish.

295. **deface**, cancel. (Fr. *défaire*, to unmake.)

307. **shall hence**, shall go hence.

308. **cheer**, countenance. (O.F. *chere*, the face, through Lat. from Gk. *kara*. head.)

309. **dear**=dearly, adj. for adverb.

313. **forfeit**, forfeited.

314. **between you and I**; bad grammar.

If I might, &c. Antonio begins to express a wish to see Bassanio; then remembering that his friend is in the delightful society of Portia, he breaks off, and forbears to urge him, thus affording another instance of his unselfishness.

315. **love**, *i.e.* for Antonio.

Act III.—Scene 3.

Time—Same day as Scene 2.

2. **Note how Shylock mocks at his helpless victim.**

9. **naughty.** See note on iii. 2. 18.

fond, foolish.

10. **To**, as to.

abroad, out of doors.

14. **dull-eyed**, either (1) wanting in sense, as we speak of a short-sighted action, or (2) easily brought to tears.

18. **impenetrable cur**, low ill-bred fellow incapable of feeling.

19. **kept**, dwelt.

Let him alone. Probably Salarino has impulsively whipped out his sword to strike the Jew.

20. **bootless**, useless. (O.E. *bót*, profit.)

22. **forfeitures**, penalties.

23. **made moan.** See i. 1. 126.

25. **grant . . . to hold**, allow to hold good, be carried out.

26. **deny the course of law**, refuse to let the law take its course.

27. **commodity**, the advantage that foreigners enjoyed of being treated as equals with the natives. Another explanation is, "convenience of trading."

32. **bated**, lessened, "pulled me down." (Shortened from *abate*, O.F. *abatre*, to beat down.)

Act III.—Scene 4.

Time—Later in the same day as Scene 2.

2. **conceit**, idea.

3. **amity**, friendship.

6. **gentleman.** Dative case (indirect object). We use the dative without a preposition nowadays only when it comes between the verb and its direct object: *e.g.* "you sent the gentleman relief."

7. **lover**, friend.

9. **Than your usual kindness and generosity can make you to be.**

11. **Nor shall not:** notice the double negative.

12. **waste,** spend (not necessarily unprofitably).

13. Who love each other equally, just as two oxen yoked together bear equal burdens.

14, 15. People who love each other equally must be alike in features (lineaments), in manners, and in character (spirit).

20. In buying the release of Antonio, who resembles Bassanio, who is as dear to me as my soul. The idea is that of redeeming souls from purgatory.

25. **husbandry,** stewardship.

manage, management.

26–31. This is a pious fiction on the part of Portia, in order to conceal her plan of going to Padua to play the lawyer. It was not uncommon in the middle ages for ladies to seek refuge in monasteries while their male relatives were absent.

33. Not to refuse this task I put upon you.

lays, singular verb with two nominatives.

62. **with imagined speed,** quick as thought.

53. **traject, ferry.** Ital. *traghetto.* (The old editions have *tranect,* which does not occur elsewhere, and is probably a mistake.)

ferry, ferry-boat.

56. **convenient,** suitable.

59. **of us,** of our seeing them.

60. **habit,** dress.

61, 62. **we are accomplished with** that we lack, we possess what we have not (*i.e.* manliness).

63. **accoutred,** dressed and provided with weapons.

65. **braver grace,** more gallant and distinguished appearance.

66, 67. **And speak . . . reed voice,** and speak in rough uncertain tones, such as a boy has when his voice is breaking.

67. **mincing,** little.

68. **frays,** fights, quarrels.

69. **quaint,** artfully made up.

72. **I could not do withal, I could** not help it.

74. **puny,** feeble.

75. **That,** so that.

77. **raw tricks, tricks showing the** clumsiness and inexperience of youth.

Jacks, a common nickname.

79. **all my whole,** a *pleonastic* expression, *i.e.* more words are used to express the sense than are necessary.

80. **coach.** Coaches came into use in England in the 16th century. Though the scene is laid in Venice and the neighbourhood, Shakespeare ascribes to the Venetians customs and ideas common to the Englishmen of his day. It has been said of the mobs of citizens in his Roman plays, that they are thoroughly and unmistakably English.

Act III.—Scene 5.

Time—Day after Scene 4.

1. **sirrah,** fellow.

3. **wit-snapper,** one who snaps up what is said in order to exercise his wit on it; joke about it.

6, 7. There is a pun here. Lorenzo means, "Will you lay covers on the table?" Launcelot answers him as if he meant "Will you cover your head?"

8. **quarrelling with occasion,** seizing every opportunity to make perverse replies.

16. **discretion, judgment in the choice of words.**

16. **suited,** arranged.

19–21. Many fools of higher rank, with no more intelligence than he has, will turn a serious subject to ridicule for the sake of their joking word.

21. **How cheer'st thou? what cheer?** how are you?

25. **live, should live: subjunctive** mood.

28. **mean it,** *i.e.* mean to lead an upright life. (It is believed that there is some corruption in the text. For *mean it, then,* Pope pro-

posed to read *merit it.* The sense seems to require some word meaning *appreciate.*)

33. **Pawn'd,** pledged

35. **of me,** in me.

37. **anon,** presently.

38. **stomach,** inclination.

41. **set you forth,** give a full description of you. Jessica would probably say this in a joking yet emphatic way; as much as to say, you don't know yet what you'll have to digest in my description.

Act IV.—Scene I.

Time—Same day as Act iv. Scene 5.

1. **What,** exclamation calling attention.

5. **Uncapable,** used in Shakespeare's time as well as *incapable.*

void and empty. *Void* (L. *vidurs*) means empty. Shylock is so merciless as to be compared to a stone jar absolutely empty of liquid.

6. **From:** we now say *of.*

7. **qualify,** modify, alter.

8. **rigorous course,** harsh proceedings.

obdurate, hardened and immovable. (L. *ob,* and *duro,* I harden.)

10. **out of his envy's reach,** beyond the power of his hatred.

oppose, place against.

18, 19. That you are continuing this appearance of malicious design only till the hour comes for acting on it.

20. **remorse,** pity, consideration.

22. **where,** whereas.

24. **loose,** let go.

26. **moiety,** portion. (Literally *half.*)

principal, sum lent.

28. **huddled,** crowded one after another.

29. **Enow,** enough. (O.E. *genoh.*)

33. **offices of tender courtesy,** voluntary acts of kindliness.

34. **gentle,** a pun on "Gentile."

35. **possess'd,** informed.

37. **due and forfeit,** debt and penalty.

39. Shakespeare appeared to think that Venice was free by charter from an emperor, just as London had a charter of freedom from Henry I. But Venice was itself a free republic

41. **carrion,** dead.

43. **say,** suppose.

is it answer'd? is that answer sufficient?

46. **baned,** poisoned. Cf. *ratsbane.* (O.E. *bana,* murderer.)

47. **love,** *i.e.* that love; omission of relative.

gaping pig, either (1) a squealing pig, or (2) a pig's head served at table. At Queen's College, Oxford, a boar's head is still served up on Christmas-day with a lemon in its mouth.

49–51. *Affection* is the feeling produced through the senses by outward objects. This is said to be *mistress of passion, i.e.* is the cause on which the real mental emotions depend. The meaning is that things first please or displease the senses, and that then the mind likes or dislikes them accordingly

53–55. **he..he..he,** the different men alluded to in lines 46–48.

55. **woollen.** The air-bag of the bagpipe was perhaps made of sheepskin with the wool left on it. But the text is very likely corrupt. *Warbling* would perhaps be a more suitable word.

55–57. But he cannot help submitting to the unavoidable shame of offending others, because he himself is offended.—Shylock means that a man cannot always explain why he dislikes a thing, but makes the best of it; just as he must put up with being disliked by other people.

59. **lodged,** fixed.

60. **that,** why.

61. **A losing suit.** Shylock would lose his 3000 ducats and gain nothing but worthless flesh.

63. **current,** swift course.

67. **offence,** injured feeling

69. Remember that it is the hard Jew you are arguing with.

71. **main flood,** ocean.

bate his usual height, fall short

of the height to which the tide usually rises.

75. to make no noise. We must supply *bid* from *forbid*.

76. fretted, disturbed, waved to and fro. (O.E. *fretan*, to gnaw.)

81. In the shortest and plainest way that is suitable.

82. judgement, sentence against me.

91. abject, mean. (Lat. *ab*, away; *jacere*, to throw.)

parts, duties.

103. upon my power, on my authority.

105. Portia could hardly have known that the Duke had sent for Bellario. She had probably left Belmont to ask him, being a friend of hers, what was the exact legal position of her husband's friend Antonio. Finding that Bellario had been sent for, she would persuade him to let her go disguised in his place, and get him to coach her in the legal points.

determine, decide.

114. meetest, fittest.

117. epitaph, inscription on a tomb in memory of the dead.

120–123. Shylock is sharpening his knife on the *sole* of his shoe. Gratiano says that his *soul* is so hard that he might almost use that for the same purpose.

127. inexecrable, one that cannot be cursed enough.

128. Justice herself is committing a crime in letting you live.

130. Pythagoras, the great philosopher (flourished 540–510 B.C.), born at Samos. He is believed to have taught that at a man's death his soul passes into some other body (the *transmigration* of souls).

131. infuse themselves, pour themselves into (as a liquid into a vessel). (Lat. *in*, into; *fundere*, to pour.)

132, 133. Your dog-like spirit once dwelt in and controlled the actions of a wolf.

133. who: there is no verb to this nominative, which may be considered a nominative absolute.

134. fell, cruel.

138. rail, scold, abuse.

139. offend'st, harmest.

141. cureless, past mending.

153. controversy, dispute.

157. importunity, pressing request.

fill up, fulfil.

159. no impediment... estimation, no hindrance to his receiving the consideration due to his position as a great lawyer.

161, 162. whose trial... commendation; *whose* may refer either to *him* or to *you*: either way, the meaning is that experience of the young lawyer's skill would commend him better than any letter of introduction.

166. take your place, probably by the side of the Duke.

167. difference, dispute.

168. That holds this present question, that is the subject of the present argument.

169. throughly, thoroughly.

174. in such rule, in such strict accordance with legal form.

175. impugn, call in question, attack.

176. within his danger, liable to a penalty inflicted by him. (Low Lat. *domigerium*, power of inflicting a fine.)

178, 179. Shylock seizes on the word *must*, which had been used by Portia without emphasis.

180. Mercy, one of the qualities or attributes of the soul, is not forced.

182. twice blest, brings a double blessing.

184. becomes, is becoming to, adorns.

186. shows, is the emblem of.

temporal power, earthly power, power for a *time* only, as contrasted with God's power, which is eternal.

187, 188. That which belongs to the awe and majesty of kings, and on which rests the fear in which they are held by their subjects.

190. While a king's power depends on things outside himself, mercy does not, but itself rules in his heart.

192. show, appear.

193. seasons, moderates, and so makes more pleasant.

194. Though you base your demand on justice.

195. in the course of justice, in

justice were allowed to run its course without mercy.

197. **that same prayer**, the Lord's Prayer. Shylock would not recognize the Lord's Prayer, but the same teaching is contained in some parts of the Old Testament.

render, give in return.

199. **mitigate**, soften. (Lat. *mitis*, soft.)

202. **My deeds upon my head, I will** be answerable for my own actions.

204. **discharge the money**, pay the debt.

210. **malice bears down truth**, the Jew's hatred is stronger than his honourableness (as though the qualities were placed on the opposite sides of a pair of scales).

211. For once, make the law give way to your will.

213. **curb**, keep back.

of his will, from getting what he wishes.

215. **can**, *i.e.* that can: omission of relative.

216. **a precedent.** When engaged in legal cases, lawyers often quote *precedents*, that is, *preceding* cases, cases which have been decided before, and the decisions in which they think should influence the decision in the present case. Hence one wrongful decision might be the cause of others.

219. **A Daniel**, referring to the wise judgment of Daniel in a difficult case, when a young man; recorded in one of the apocryphal books of the Bible.

224. **an oath**, see line 36 above.

225. **Shylock is willing** (see line 202) to accept the responsibility for inhuman cruelty towards Antonio, but he now professes himself unwilling to have the guilt of breaking his oath upon his conscience.

226. **forfeit**, forfeited.

231. **tenour**, the terms, what is set forth.

238. **exposition**, explanation. Shylock tries flattery.

243–245. The meaning and the purpose of the law fully apply to the present case, even though the penalty, which by the terms of the bond is due to the Jew, should be so extraordinary.

247. **more elder**, double comparative.

248–250. Shylock here shows how he hates Antonio.

251. **balance, scales**; singular used as plural, perhaps because the word ends with an *s* sound.

253. **on your charge, at your expense.**

255. **nominated** named.

257. **'Twere good you do, it would** be well for you to do.—Shylock, by relying so absolutely on his bond, is really cutting the ground from under his own feet. See line 301, &c.

264. **still her use**, constantly her custom.

270. **process**, the whole circumstances.

271. **speak me fair in death**, speak well of me when I am dead.

273. **love**, dear friend.

274. **Repent but you**, if only you are sorry.

277. **with all my heart**; a pun. Antonio says this with an attempt to smile, in order to cheer his friend. So Charles II., when at the point of death, apologized to those standing by for being so long dying.

287. **so**, if only.

292. **stock of Barrabas, family**, descendants, of the robber-murderer whom the Jews preferred to Christ. (Pronounce *Barrabas* with accent on first syllable. The correct spelling is *Barabbas*.)

307. **confiscate**, past participle = *confiscated*, forfeited.

309. **Gratiano is so delighted at the** new turn things are taking that he begins to mock Shylock with his own words.

312. **more than thou desirest**, Portia here for the first time clearly sides against the Jew.

323. **a just pound**, exactly a pound.

324. **in the substance**, in the gross weight.

325. That is, one grain, the twentieth part into which a scruple is divided.

327. Either (1) if the scale is uneven by the breadth of a hair, or (2) by the weight of a hair.

335. **merely**, nothing but.

340. **so**, as stated in the bond.

342. **question, argument.**

345. **alien, foreigner.**

346. **direct or indirect.** Shylock's attempt was both direct and indirect. The penalty directly stated in the bond was a pound of flesh; but this of course involved the death of the man from whom it should be cut.

348. **contrive, plot.**

350. **privy coffer, private treasury.**

351. **in the mercy; we should say, *at* the mercy.**

352. **voice, vote, decision.**

353. **predicament, awkward position.** (Originally a term in logic. The names of the classes into which all statements can be divided were called *predicaments.*)

354. **manifest proceeding, clear evidence.**

357. **incurr'd, come in the way of.**

358. **formerly . . . rehearsed, repeated just now.**

366. **For, as for, concerning.**

368. Submission may induce me to make you pay a fine, instead of handing over all your money.

369. Portia means that the duke may accept a fine instead of the half due to the state, but that Antonio must receive his half in full.

375. **halter, rope to hang himself with.**

377. **quit, give up demanding.** Antonio asks that Shylock may not even have to pay a fine to the state.

378. **so, if.**

379. **in use, in trust.**

383. **presently, at once.** In Shakespeare's time it was common for men to change their religion suddenly.

385. **possess'd, *i.e.* possessed *of:*** see ii. 6. 9.

387. **recant, recall, withdraw.**

388. **late, lately, *i.e.* just now.**

390. **draw a deed of gift, draw up a document by which this gift may be legally made.**

395. **ten more, to make up twelve jurymen to find him guilty.**

398. **desire your grace of pardon, we should say, "desire pardon of your grace."**

401. **serves you not, is not at your disposal.**

402. **gratify, make some return to.**

406. **in lieu whereof, in return for which.**

408. **cope, give as an equal return.**
withal, with; preposition governing *ducats.*

414. **more mercenary, derived any further reward than my own satisfaction with a good deed done.**

415. Portia has a double meaning here. She asks in the person of the lawyer that Bassanio will recognize the lawyer again; at the same time she is gleefully thinking that when next he sees her, with the disguise removed, he will not recognize the lawyer in her. She perhaps lays some stress on *you,* as she says *I pray you* to Bassanio; then she turns to Antonio and says, *I wish* YOU *well,* no doubt hoping that he will hear good news of his ships.

417. **of force, of necessity.**
attempt you further, make a further attempt to persuade you.

418. **tribute, acknowledgment of our thanks.**

427. **shame myself to give, disgrace myself by giving.**

441. **an if, a *pleonasm:*** see notes on i. 4. 10 and iii. 4. 79.

446. **withal, in addition.**

Act IV.—Scene 2.

Time—Immediately after Scene 1.

6. **you are well o'erta'en, I am glad to have overtaken you.**

6. **advice, consideration.**

11. **my youth, Nerissa.** Mark how skilfully Shakespeare manages to bring Gratiano and Nerissa together.

15. **old, used intensively, without any special meaning, as in the schoolboy's slang phrase, "fine old game."**

19. **show, conduct.**

Act V—Scene I.

Time—Day after Act iv. Late at night.

Notice what a pleasing effect this beautiful and poetic scene has after the tragic strain of the last act.

4. **Troilus**, son of Priam king of Troy. His love, Cressida, was given to the Greeks in exchange for a Trojan prisoner. Shakespeare had in mind a line in Chaucer's poem *Troilus and Creseide*.

5. **sigh'd his soul**, sighed as though his very soul were leaving his body in yearning after Cressida.

7. **Thisbe**, a beautiful girl of Babylon, loved by Pyramus. She arranged to meet him, and while waiting for him at the appointed place, saw a lioness, and ran away. In running one of her garments slipped from her, which the lioness soiled with blood. Pyramus found it, and thinking Thisbe was devoured, he killed himself, as Thisbe did when she found his dead body. Her story is told by Ovid.

10. **Dido**, queen of Carthage in N. Africa, was beloved for a time by Æneas of Troy, the founder of the Roman race, who landed at Carthage in the course of his wanderings. When he sailed away for Italy she was heart-broken, and Shakespeare (without classical authority) pictures her upon the sea-shore waving a willow branch, the emblem of forsaken love, to induce him to return. In the account of Dido in Vergil's *Æneid*, she has herself burnt to death on a funeral pile.

11. **waft** = wafted, waved.

13. **Medea**, daughter of the king of Colchis, fell in love with Jason (see note on i. 1. 171), and helped him get the golden fleece. On returning home with him as his wife, she made old Æson his father young again by her magical arts. Her story is told by Ovid.

These fabulous old stories may have been read by Shakespeare in Ovid, the Latin poet, whose works were translated into English. But the names also occur in Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* in the order in which Shakespeare introduces them.

enchanted. Herbs gathered at particular times, as at midnight or by moonlight, and in particular places, and with certain ceremonies, were supposed to have magical powers.

14–22. The beautiful night has recalled to the memory of the lovers these old-world stories, and Jessica has kept up with Lorenzo. Now he, in the same tone and the same form of words, begins playfully to talk of Jessica. She returns the compliment, until Lorenzo at the words *he forgave it her*, stops her with a kiss.

15. **steal**; in two senses: (1) steal away, (2) steal his precious ducats and jewels.

16. **unthrift, unthrifty**, extravagant.

19. **stealing.** Jessica means that she is not the only one who stole, for if she stole her father's money, Lorenzo stole her heart away.

vows of faith, promises that h would be true to her.

21. **shrew**, scolding woman.

23. **I would out-night you**, I would out-do you in telling of things that happened "in such a night."

28. **Stephano.** Accent on second syllable, though the accent is properly on the first.

30. **stray**, wander.

31. **crosses.** Crosses are erected, in all Roman Catholic countries, on many spots, to commemorate various events, from the birth of a saint to the death of a murdered person.

35. **nor . . . not**; see iii. 4. 11.

36. **go we**; imperative mood; let us go.

37 **ceremoniously**, with proper arrangements, such as lighting up the hall (line 89), and arranging for the playing of music (line 53).

39. Launcelot enters with his hand to his mouth, imitating the sounds of the post-horn.

46. **post**; see note on ii. 9. 100.

47. **horn.** There is a punning allusion here to the full horn as an emblem of plenty.

49. **expect, await.**

51. **signify,** make known.

58. **music,** musical instruments, or band of musicians.

54. The moonbeams shining calmly in the night are said to sleep sweetly on the bank. See note on line 109 below.

56, 57. The time and place and surroundings are suited to the sweet harmonious sounds that come at the touch of the lutists' fingers.

58–65. See how the sky is studded with stars, that shine like plates of gold. All the planets, large and small, sing like angels as they move, constantly raising the chorus to the cherubim, who ever keep their youthful look. Our immortal souls have within them the power to make this sweet music, but while they are covered as with a thick garment by our bodies, that spring from earth and to earth again decay, we cannot hear it.

59. **patines.** The *patine* (now spelt *paten*, L. *patina*) is a small plate, usually of gold, used to cover the cup in the mass of the Roman Catholic church.

61. **his** = its.

Shakespeare is here perhaps referring to what is called the "music of the spheres." The earth was supposed by the ancients to be inclosed by eight spheres, on each of which stood a beautiful female form, who uttered a single note as the sphere went round, the whole eight forming perfect harmony. So in Job xxxviii. 7, we read, "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Lorenzo partly adopts this old idea of celestial music, and represents stars and angels as answering one another in song.

62. **cherubins.** The plural of the Hebrew word *cherub* is *cherubim*, but *cherubin* was used as a singular in the Latin version of the Bible called the *Vulgate*, and so in English and French *cherubin* was regarded as singular, and a new plural *cherubins* was formed. In English we also have the plural *cherubs*.

66. **Diana,** the Roman goddess of light, represented the moon. See note on line 109 below.

70. **attentive, thinking of other things.**

71. **wanton,** playful.

72. **unhandled,** not broken in.

73. **Fetching,** performing.

77. **make a mutual stand, all stand** still with one consent.

79. **the poet,** the Roman poet Ovid (B.C. 43–A.D. 18). He tells the story in his great poem the *Metamorphoses*, Books x. and xi.

80. **Orpheus,** one of Jason's companions. He was given a lyre by the god Apollo, and played so sweetly that animals, trees, and rocks moved after him. His wife Eurydice having died, he followed her to Hades, where he so charmed the god of the infernal regions that Eurydice was allowed to follow him to earth, on condition that Orpheus would not look at her until they had reached the upper world. He had just reached the boundary when his anxiety to see if his wife were following him overcame him. He looked round; immediately Eurydice was snatched away.

81, 82. There is nothing so immovable, hard, and angry tempered as that its nature is not changed for a time by music.

81. **stockish,** lifeless like a block of wood or stone.

84. **Not . . . not;** see iii. 4. 11.

85. **treasons, stratagems, and spoils,** plots against the state, tricks against fellowmen, and acts of plunder.

86, 87. The workings of his mind are slow and uninteresting, and his disposition is as gloomy as Erebus.

87. **Erebus,** the name given to the dark space beneath the earth, through which souls were supposed to pass on their way to Hades.

88. Lorenzo and Jessica are seated on the bank at one side of the stage listening to the music. Portia and Nerissa enter at the opposite side. The moon is obscured by a cloud, and their presence is not noticed by the newly married couple until Portia says *Peace, ho!*

91. **naughty,** wicked.

94. **brightly as,** as brightly as.

96. **empties itself,** he loses his po-

sition, and his brilliance seems to be swallowed up in his master's.

97. **main of waters,** ocean.

98. **music,** *i.e.* band.

99. **without respect,** without considering or comparing with other things. Just as the candle's light seems strong when seen alone, but feeble when the moon is shining, so the music in the calmness of the night sounds sweeter than it would if heard by day.

103. **attended,** listened to attentively.

107, 108. How many things act agreeably on our senses, so that we can esteem them aright and see their true excellence, because they come at a fitting time.—There is a pun on *season*.

109. **Peace, ho!** Portia raises her voice, and Lorenzo and Jessica start up from their seat on the bank.

the moon sleeps with Endymion. Endymion was a youth of such beauty that the moon-goddess, who cared for no one else, fell in love with him, and sent him into a deep sleep so that she might lie by his side and kiss him without his knowledge.

110. **would not be awaked.** The moon was now hidden behind a cloud. So Diana was represented as sleeping with Endymion, not wishing to be awaked until morning.

would not, wished not.

115. **speed,** prosper.

120. **No note, no notice, make no** remark.

tucket, set of notes on the trumpet. (Ital. *toccata*.)

127, 128. We should have daylight at the same time as the people on the other side of the world, if you would walk in our night-time, when the sun has gone to them.—Bassanio greets his wife with a pretty compliment.

129. **light.** There is a pun here.

130. **a light wife,** frivolous in conduct.

heavy, sad; another pun.

132. **God sort all!** May God dispose, arrange, all things.

136. **in all sense, in all reason, or in** every respect.

141. I cut short this courtesy which consists in words only.

142. Gratiano, who entered with Bassanio and Antonio, at once went to his wife, who, instead of showing herself pleased to see him, has accused him of parting with his ring.

148. **posy,** the motto cut on the ring. So called because such mottos were often in verse: it is the same word as *poesy*.

150. **leave me not,** do not part with me. Another such motto is, "Cut and come again."

151. **what,** why; an exclamation of impatience.

155, 156. **not for me, yet for . . . respective,** regardful, if not of me, yet of your strongly expressed oaths.

158. Nerissa means that he gave it to a lady,—as of course he unknowingly did.

162. **scrubbed,** short, stumpy. We now use *scrub* in the same sense. So *shrub* is a short tree, *scrub* in short brushwood. (O. E. *scrob*).—Nerissa is well paid out by the unflattering names her husband unknowingly calls her.

164. **prating,** talkative.

167. **so slightly,** on so slight a plea, after such little pressing.

168. **riveted with faith,** fastened by a promise.

172. **leave;** see note on line 150.

182. **That took some pains.** This is Gratiano's reason for giving the ring. As the judge (Portia) had deserved Bassanio's ring by what he had done for Antonio, so, Gratiano thought, the clerk (Nerissa) had deserved his ring by the pains he took in writing the deed or the record of the judgment. No doubt Nerissa had to take pains to make her writing appear like a clerk's.

189. **void,** empty.

193–197. Bassanio's repetition of the words, *the ring*, shows that he is playfully trying to appease his wife's wrath,—as much as to say, what a lot of fuss about so small a thing!

199. **virtue, power.** In iii. 2. 172, Portia gave Bassanio the ring as a

sign that her house, her servants, and herself were his.

201. If you considered how your honour was involved in keeping the ring safe.

204. to have defended; *to defend* would be more correct.

205. With any terms of zeal, *i.e.* earnestly, as if you meant it.

205, 206. wanted . . . ceremony? as to have been so wanting in modesty as to urge you to give up a thing held as an emblem (*ceremony*) of my love and your faithfulness?

210. civil doctor, doctor of civil law, *i.e.* law made by men to govern their relations as citizens (Lat. *civis*, citizen); opposed to *divine* law, the laws of God.

217. I was troubled with a feeling of shame at seeming ungrateful in refusing so small a thing, and with a sense of what courtesy demanded of me.

220. candles of the night, the stars.

225. enforced wrong, wrong I could not help doing.

228. Portia is very hard on him, snatching up his words when he is most serious and complimentary to her.

231. of credit, worthy of belief. To swear double is to swear falsely. Portia is ironical.

234. wealth, well-being, welfare.

235. which, the loan of my body.

236. Had miscarried, would have been disastrous, ended in disaster.

238. advisedly, deliberately.

239. surety, one who is bound for another.

254. richly, with rich cargoes.
suddenly, unexpectedly.

256. dumb, with surprise and joy.

259. living; see note on iii. 2. 158.

261. road; see note on i. i. 19.

267. manna. See Exodus xvi.

269, 270. You are not . . . full, you are not fully satisfied with my story of these events.

271, 272. "In the Court of Queen's Bench, when a complaint is made against a person for a 'contempt,' the practice is that before sentence is finally pronounced he is sent into the Crown Office, and being there 'charged upon interrogatories,' he is made to swear that he will 'answer all things faithfully.'" —The familiarity with legal terms which Shakespeare shows has led some to think that he may have been in youth a lawyer's clerk. But he shows great familiarity with many things, such as seamanship, medicine, madness, soldiery; and he could not have been engaged in every profession.

271. interrogatories, questions.

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3. an infinite deal of nothing, i. 1. 114.
4. All that glitters is not gold, ii. 7. 65.
5. Fast bind, fast find, ii. 5. 53.
6. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man, i. 2. 47.
7. Hanging and wiving goes by destiny, ii. 9. 83.
8. I am Sir Oracle,
   And when I ope my lips let no dog bark. i. 1. 93.
9. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions, i. 2. 13.
10. Like one well studied in a sad ostent
    To please his grandam. ii. 2. 179.
11. love is blind, ii. 6. 36.
12. Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time, i. 1. 51.
13. suffrance is the badge of all our tribe, i. 3. 96.
14. The devil can cite scripture for his purpose, i. 3. 84.
15. The man that hath no music in himself,
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    Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. v. 1. 83.
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    Will bless it and approve it with a text! iii. 2. 78.
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cerecloth, ii. 7. 51.
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doit, i. 3. 126.
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ostent, ii. 2. 179.
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patine, v. 1. 59.
peize, iii. 2. 22.
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prest, i. 1. 160.
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scrubbed, v. 1. 162.
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simple, iii. 2. 81.
smack, ii. 2. 14.
smug, iii. 1. 35.
sonties, ii. 2. 38.
sort, i. 2. 89.
suitors, i. 1. 169.
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tucket, v. 1. 120.
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„ preposition, i. 1. 125; ii. 1. 16; ii. 6. 9; iv. 1. 385.
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heart, iv. 1. 277.
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hood, ii. 6. 51.
horn, v. 1. 47.
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light, ii. 6. 42; iii. 2. 91; v. 1. 129.
mean, i. 2. 6.
obscured, ii. 6. 44.
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PASSAGES TO BE LEARNT.

1. Let me play ... after dinner, i. 1. 79–104.
2. In my school-days ... fortunate, i. 1. 140–176.
3. Signior Antonio ... moneys, i. 3. 92–115.
4. A kinder gentleman ... parted, ii. 8. 35–49.
5. To bait fish ... instruction, iii. 1. 41–58.
6. I pray you ... election, iii. 2. 1–24.
7. Let music sound ... fray, iii. 2. 43–62.
8. So may ... consequence, iii. 2. 73–107.
9. You see me ... on you, iii. 2. 149–175.
10. I never did ... upon you, iii. 4. 10–35.
11. They shall ... practise, iii. 4. 60–78.
12. I have possess'd ... answer'd, iv. 1. 35–61.
13. The quality ... deeds of mercy, iv. 1. 180–198.
14. How sweet ... hear it, v. 1. 54–65.
15. The reason ... trusted, v. 1. 70–88.

The following passages contain special difficulties, and should be studied with the corresponding notes.

Act I.	Sc. 1. 95–99.	Act III.	Sc. 2. 182–184.
	Sc. 2. 17, 18.		Sc. 2. 314.
	Sc. 3. 122.		Sc. 3. 26–28.
Act II.	Sc. 2. 14, 15.	Act IV.	Sc. 1. 49–51.
	Sc. 2. 144.		Sc. 1. 55–57.
	Sc. 4. 35–37.		Sc. 1. 325.
	Sc. 9. 46–49.	Act V.	Sc. 1. 203–206

APPENDIX ON DRAMATIC REPRODUCTION

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DRAMATIC REPRODUCTION

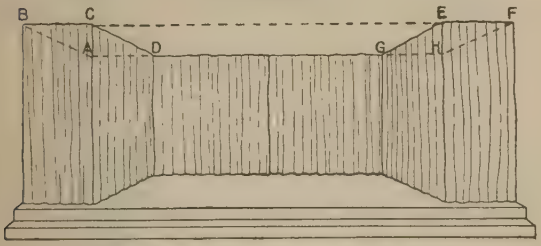
GENERAL REMARKS ON INDOOR PRESENTATION

If the performance is indoors, it is assumed that a fair-sized room and a platform are available. If the stage is of a temporary nature, care should be taken to see that the planks have been fastened securely, as carelessness on this point, easily adjustable by the aid of a hammer and nails, is apt to be very damaging to the atmosphere created by the play. If the stage has a slight slope upwards towards the back, the actors will be much better seen, and if a step be allowed to break the harsh line produced by the height of the stage above the auditorium, and thus to connect the stage with the audience, a great sense of intimacy between players and audience will have been gained. Such a step need not be a permanent fixture, although in building a stage it is very advantageous to employ one or more to "break the line" and to afford an effectual method of crowd entrance and exit, as in Reinhardt productions; but for a temporary production such a step may be satisfactorily improvised by the use of a plank carried on supports which can easily be draped. Its value in grouping posed figures, in keeping the action "down-stage" and yet not obliterating the central figures, in correcting any impression of a shallow stage as well as in providing an easy method of entrance, will readily be appreciated.

Where possible a large stage may be hung with a curtain-surround, completely draping the side and back walls, and then divided by a series of three traverse curtains into fore-stage, middle-stage, and rear-stage, as in Diagram IV. Such a method has the advantage of providing frequent changes in the size of the scene, wherein a large section is available for

crowd scenes or a small fore-stage for prologue, epilogue, &c., which may be delivered frankly and sincerely immediately before the audience. Moreover, stage-setting under this method will be seen to be enormously facilitated, as each scene can be

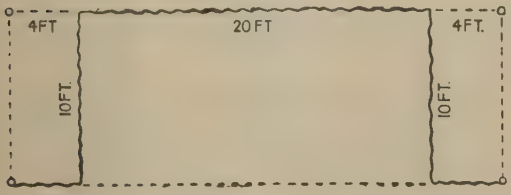
DIAGRAM I



A Simple Form of Curtain Surround showing Wires

B, F represents wire stretched across front of stage to carry curtains C, D and G, E, which form sides of stage. A, H represents wire stretched across back of stage to carry back curtain. B, C and E, F, Curtains hung to mark side passages to stage.

DIAGRAM II

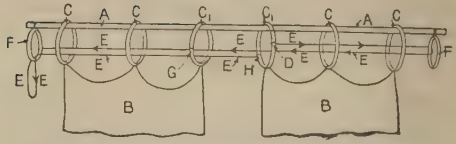


Ground Plan of Stage for above Curtain Surround

set behind closed curtains and the plays carried on without interruptions or waits. Painted skies and backcloths should, where possible, be eliminated or only used on the rear wall, where they may take the place of the curtain-surround.

Localities in important scenes should be shown by some single conspicuous property, such as a church by a churchyard

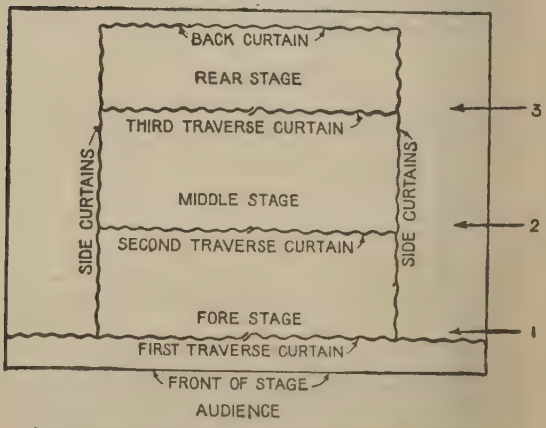
DIAGRAM III



A Method of Erecting and Drawing Single-cord Curtain

A, A, Curtain rod. B, B, Curtains, meeting in the middle. C, C, Curtain rings. C_1. C_1, The two middle rings. D, One end of cord fastened to middle ring C_1. E, E, Direction in which cord runs to open curtain. F, F, Fixed rings or eyelets at each end of rod. G, Point at which cord is fixed to other end of middle ring C_1. H, Other end of cord, fastened to first ring C_1. The rings must all fit and run easily.

DIAGRAM IV

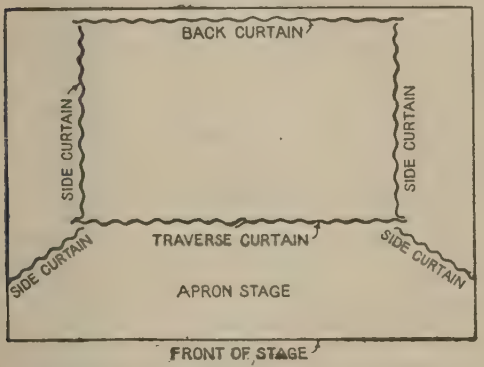


Stage divided into Fore Stage, Middle Stage, and Rear Stage by the employment of Three Traverse Curtains

cross, a royal palace by a dais and throne, a garden by a row of conventional trees, which may readily be cut out from beaver board and then painted. Such simple, plain, and striking devices will always prove the most successful since they do not confuse realism with imagination, or conflict with the atmosphere of the play created by the dramatist.

The simplest form of curtain-surround is shown in Diagram 1. It is made of cheap coloured casement cloth or dyed hessian,

DIAGRAM V



Stage in which Proscenium Curtain has been abolished. An open Apron Stage is shown with Traverse Curtain opening upon a narrower stage beyond.

both of which materials may be purchased very inexpensively, and which alike possess the quality of falling in excellent folds. The bottom hem should be made some six inches deep and weighted with sand or light chain to prevent the curtains moving and revealing the feet of the waiting actors. The top hem, which should be made of a corresponding depth of six inches, should have curtain-pins inserted at distances of every few inches; these in turn hook on to rings inserted over the cables on which the curtains are hung. A slight movement of the hand will then allow the curtains to be run along into

any required position. The two light cables which carry the curtains are stretched from wall to wall at a height of about ten feet. The hooks which hold them should be fastened firmly into the wall, as the strain is great. The back wire should be far enough from the back wall to allow easy passage behind the curtain if only one traverse curtain is to be used. If the wire shows a tendency to sag at the centre, it should be supported by a vertical wire let down from the ceiling at that point. The curtains should be arranged, as in Diagram I, to give a four- to five-foot passage on each side of the stage, which will serve as a wing.

Diagram II shows a ground plan of the stage for above curtain-surrounds, and Diagram III an easy method of contriving a single-cord curtain. Such curtain may serve as a proscenium curtain to divide the stage from the audience or as one of the suggested traverse curtains, as in Diagram IV.

An effective setting can be secured by the abolition of the proscenium curtain altogether, as in Diagram V, when the audience on arrival find a narrow apron stage facing them unmasked, with the traverse curtain behind it. The use of such apron stage will be to act as a street, as a place from which to deliver prologue, epilogue, &c., or for small scenes, but care must be taken to see that actors do not appear upon it accidentally. The larger stage will then be immediately behind the traverse curtain and will be revealed by the simple action of drawing back the traverse cord. This method also gains by the ease with which the inner stage may be set while the play is being carried forward on the apron stage, thus avoiding loss of time and breaks in the attention of the audience.

GENERAL REMARKS ON OUTDOOR PRESENTATION

If the play be given out of doors, the producer should endeavour to select a site in which either players or audience are on rising ground, and in which trees or bushes will form a natural background to frame in the players and provide one or more entrances to the stage. As a rule open-air producers err in selecting too large a stage, in which the human figure is lost, and moreover it must be remembered that an auditorium area of seventy feet is the maximum range of an amateur's audibility.

If the play be given on a terrace with a wall for a background, the latter will act as a sounding-board and permit a far wider range of audibility with a correspondingly smaller expenditure of voice. With such a brick or stone sounding-board behind the actors, the natural speaking voice will carry a distance of a hundred and fifty feet if the air is still.

If a natural background of trees is not available, an excellent effect may be obtained by lashing together hurdles and decorating them with boughs in such a way as to give the appearance of a hedge; such screens may also be placed to serve as wings. Frequently it may be advisable to choose a stage-section which contains one large tree, somewhere near the centre, as a pivot for the action. Such a tree will tend to " throw up " the main figures standing beside it, to act as a screen for a concealed observer, as a retiring-place for someone who has to step out of the action for a moment, or for any business arising out of the play.

The majority of amateur producers tend to allow too little light for outdoor plays. It must be remembered that daylight fails quickly and is weak in quality after 8 p.m. summer-time. If electric or acetylene lighting is not available, four motor lamps, judiciously placed with rays carried downwards, will give enough white light. Two more should be added if the light is to be coloured by the use of silk strips or gelatine covers. Lighting intensity and effect should, in both indoor and outdoor presentation, always be judged from the rear of the auditorium.

GENERAL REMARKS ON COSTUME

Several methods of dressing a Shakespearean play may be adopted. Shakespeare and his company probably wore the costumes of their day, and to use Elizabethan dresses to-day gets rid of the difficulties of historical accuracy in the varying periods and allows of one type of costume for any Shakespearean play.

Alternative methods are to adopt the costumes which would be historically accurate for the place and period of the particular play, or costumes of a Romance period which may be said to represent imaginative costume and usually owe their inspiration to fifteenth-century Italy.

Where possible costumes should be made and adapted by

the players. Surcoats, tabards, and banners should be designed and executed on the spot. Costumes for any of the Shakespearean plays in all periods and sizes may be borrowed from the Hon. Secretary, Citizen House, Bath, and a letter enclosing a stamped addressed envelope will elicit full particulars. Where, however, it is possible to make costumes, the following hints may be of value:—

The producer should decide upon his standard and adhere to it throughout. If he choose for his men simple, smock-like tunics, he should carry that scheme throughout, securing variety by colour or ornament. For the latter bold appliqué work will be found the most effective. If he desires slashed or puffed effects, he should maintain that standard. For men the essential parts of a costume are tunic and hose. Trunks need be used only when the action of the play demands that an actor take off his tunic for a fight or any other purpose. Long stockings joined to knickers can frequently be substituted for tights, and cross-gartering above and below the knee will transform modern trousers into the nether garments of a mediæval yokel. For women the most effective dress is a one-piece gown cut " princess " style, into the girdling of which considerable variety can be introduced.

The simplest cape as well as the best for general use is the circular one. The material when cut out should form a complete circle with a hole in the centre for the neck, and an opening from collar to hem. For young characters the capes come to just below the hips, and for old men should touch the floor. They should be lined with a contrasting colour, in order that they may be thrown back over the shoulder. They can, if desired, be reversed and worn by other characters.

The simplest form of surcoat is a long, narrow piece of stuff with a hole for the head, and falling, back and front, to the knee. It is caught together along each side at intervals by tapes, and may frequently be worn belted at the waist. Excellent armour may be simulated by coarse wool knitting which is then painted with silver gilt or aluminium paint. A number of rough knitted dish-cloths so treated and joined together will produce the effect.

Shoes may be dispensed with and socks only need be worn turned down around the ankle. These may be made to look more like shoes by slitting them a few inches along the instep, facing the edges of the slits, and lacing them.

An excellent method of securing good designs and the effect of embroidery is to buy a piece of chintz with a bold conventional design, cut round the pattern, and appliqué it on to the garment which requires decoration.

Costumes should be made of plain, substantial materials, serge, cashmere, felt, baize, &c. Cotton, tinsel, and flimsy materials should be avoided, as historical costume rather than fancy dress is the ultimate aim of wardrobe designing.

Where possible, players should have a dress performance quite early during the rehearsal period, as they are then able to " think themselves " into their part so much more accurately. The value of a right use of any colour in a production is profound, and the colour of a player's costume should be selected not only to designate his own character but also to serve as a component part of the general colour scheme which should emphasize the spiritual and intellectual quality of the scene Examples of this colour sense are the use of the blue scenes by Maeterlinck to suggest states of the mind and of crimson and purple scenes by Reinhardt to suggest pomp and conflict.

THE TEN CHIEF POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN ACTING

1 The actor must learn his part thoroughly and study its characterization in relation to the whole play. He should speak in a natural voice, a little more slowly than in ordinary conversation, and pitch the tone in such a manner that it is clearly heard by the back row of the audience. He must be careful not to strain his voice, remembering that clear pronunciation is needed rather than loudness, that power is directly dependent upon the amount of air in the lungs, and that purity of tone depends upon the extent to which the air is vocalized.

2. The actor must learn his cues as thoroughly as his part, and pick them up quickly. It is an excellent plan for him to start actually on the final word of the last speaker. Most amateur productions owe their flatness to slow cues, which have the same effect as dropping a ball in a game.

3. While speaking, the actor should keep his face as much turned towards the audience as is consistent with naturalness. If he has to speak with his back to the audience, then the voice must be considerably raised.

4. When two or more actors enter in company, the one who is to speak first should enter second, as if the first to enter were also the first to speak, and turned to do so, he would obstruct the entry of others. If an actor has to make his exit on the words of a speech, his words should carry him right up to the wings. His exit should thus be made while speaking, as this avoids any unreality and an awkward pause.

5. The actor must avoid covering an important action in the play or an actor who is speaking. In grouping, the actors should dress both sides of the stage, and work well to the wings. They should not approach too close to the main action or huddle behind furniture. The balance of the stage-picture must always be borne in mind, and the value of profiles, back-on figures, &c., in pictorial grouping.

6. Actors on the stage should keep their eyes on the speaker and thus focus all attention on him, unless there is some action that demands the contrary. Half the business of acting is the art of standing naturally and intelligently. The longer an actor remains still on the stage, the deeper he implants himself upon the consciousness of the audience. If business is required, however, the actor must continue it whether speaking or not. He must think and feel his part all the time, or else he will be " out of the picture ".

7. " Stage right " or " stage left " means right or left as you face the audience. " Down-stage " means toward the audience, " up-stage " away from the audience. All turns should be made down-stage, as the actor should always turn towards the members of his audience rather than away from them.

8. Actors should stand with the down-stage foot drawn back and the weight thrown on that foot. When the actor wishes to advance, he should lift the front foot and carry it forward a short space, then bring up the back foot. To retreat, he should throw the weight on the front foot and retire a short space with the back foot, then step back with the front foot, and so on. This prevents jerky and awkward starting.

9. The actor's hands should hang easily at the sides with wrists and elbows flexible. The body should be held erect. When sitting, the knees should not be crossed, but one foot should be placed slightly forward in such a position that the weight of the body may instantly be thrown upon it to effect an easy and natural recovery to a standing position. When kneeling on one knee, the actor should kneel on the down-

stage knee, i.e. the one nearer the audience, because the position naturally turns him round to the audience. Otherwise his voice and half the value of his attitude will be lost.

10. The actor must avoid any hesitating, nervous, or ineffective movement. He should have a definite reason for all that he does and execute all crosses and gestures with certainty. If he has to walk up angrily to another actor, he should go decisively and near enough to strike him, remembering in such a case that a hand drawn back is more threatening than one thrust forward. In crowd cries or fights every actor on the stage should call different words or perform different actions. The combined effect will thus produce reality and vitality more effectively than a routine drill.

Above all, every actor must be keen, sensitive, enthusiastic. He should speak his lines easily, naturally, and eagerly, without dragging and without any labouring of well-known passages. To be an artist he must feel the emotion and take upon himself the personality of the character he is endeavouring to portray. Simplicity and sincerity will alone make his part.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A FEW BOOKS WHICH MAY BE FOUND USEFUL IN THE PRODUCTION OF SHAKESPEAREAN PLAYS

The New Movement in the Theatre, by Sheldon Cheney, published by Mitchell Kennerley, New York. (This deals with a simple and impressive method of stage-settings, &c.)

The Art of Speaking, by Ernest Pertwee, published by Dutton, New York. (This deals with diction, breathing, gesture, &c.)

English Costume, by Dion Calthrop, published by A. & C. Black. (This deals with all periods of historical costume, dress-designing, &c.)

The Art of Theatrical Make-up, by Cavendish Morton, published by A. & C. Black. (This deals with general instructions and advice on this subject and is well illustrated.)

A History of Everyday Things in England, by M. and C. Quennell. Part IV, Sixteenth Century. Published by Batsford. (This deals with costumes, customs, furnishings, &c., and contains excellent sketches. It is invaluable for property making.)

Shakespeare and Music, by Edward Naylor, published by Dent and also by Curwen. (This gives the melodies for a number of songs and dances, also trumpet calls, &c., otherwise difficult to obtain.)

FOR THE ACTOR'S INTERPRETATION OF SHAKESPEAREAN PLAYS

The Self-Study Shakespeare, edited by Arthur D. Innes, and published by Messrs. Blackie. (This series gives the dramatic values of the plays and their personalities.)

On the Teaching of Poetry, by Alexander Haddow, M.A., published by Messrs. Blackie. (This manual contains excellent advice on the reading and delivery of poetry.)

Scenes from Shakespeare, published in the "Masters of English Literature" series by Messrs. Blackie. (This should be consulted where scenes from plays rather than a whole play are to be produced.)

Advice on the production, setting, and costuming of any play will gladly be given by the writer of these notes on application to the Hon. Secretary Little Theatre, Citizen House, Bath.

NOTES ON PRODUCTION

OF *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE* WITH REFERENCE TO INDIVIDUAL SCENES

This play constitutes one of the favourites for school production. It is notable for its perfect craftsmanship and for the fact that it contains some of the most sublime passages in Shakespeare. By reason, moreover, of its pageantry and its slight movement for any but principal characters, it possesses great advantages for the amateur actor.

The outstanding actor is Shylock, concerning whose character and impersonation many volumes of dramatic criticism have been written. The one essential attribute for this player is, however, that he should act with a passionate sincerity and a belief in his own cause. Old Gobbo personifies foolishness and vanity in an old man, while Launcelot is a typical Shakespearean character, shrewd and keen. The Prince of Morocco, who is a serious and splendid character, forms a contrast to the arrogant and pompous Prince of Arragon.

There are twenty-four speaking parts in this play, and any number of silent players may be introduced into the Trial scene, although this is not essential.

Act I.—Scene 1

Venice. A Street

The proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage only. Antonio, Salarino, and Salanio enter left. Antonio is apt at times to regard life with a dull hopelessness, and his presence has obviously become tedious to his friends. Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano enter right. All endeavour to enliven Antonio. This scene depends upon grouping and the silent asides and glances which the members exchange and which emphasize their anxiety for Antonio. At the close of the scene Antonio exits right, Bassanio left.

Act I.—Scene 2

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House

The proscenium curtain opens showing middle-stage. The traverse curtains at the rear are parted slightly to show the three caskets on a table or stand; or, if preferred, they may be placed down-stage on the right or referred to only during this scene. They should be covered with a cloth of antique design, unless sufficiently concealed by the rear traverse curtains, in order to justify the later words: "Go, draw aside the curtains". The caskets themselves can be cardboard boxes covered with gold, silver, and black paper, or if a closer representation of lead be required, the third casket may be covered with silver paper, which is then smeared with burnt cork. Ornaments to the caskets may be modelled out of plasticine, which is then treated with gold or silver paint and stuck on with glue. The stand may be a packing-case covered with canvas which has been painted or gilded. Nerissa and Portia enter right. Portia is weary of interviewing her suitors, while her maid unsuccessfully tries to console her with good advice; at the close of the scene they exeunt left.

Act I.—Scene 3

Venice. A Public Place

Proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage only. Bassanio and Shylock enter left; the latter is surprised to find that Antonio will offer himself as security for the bond. When Antonio enters right he and Bassanio talk aside, while Shylock meditates to himself and searches the papers contained in his pouch to see if he can provide the necessary sum. At the close of the scene Shylock exits left, Bassanio and Antonio right.

Act II.—Scene 1

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House

Proscenium curtain opens showing middle-stage as in Act I, Scene 2, except that the top traverse curtains are closed. There is a flourish of cornets, and the Prince of Morocco enters left with his retinue. Portia, Nerissa, and others accompany him.

He is speaking to Portia as he enters. At the close of the scene all form a procession, cornets sound, the top traverse curtains open, revealing the rear-stage, and they go in.

Act II.—Scene 2

Venice. A Street

Proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage only. Launcelot Gobbo, Shylock's servant, enters left, talking to himself and trying to make up his mind to leave his master; at the close of his monologue he endeavours to hurry off right, but is intercepted by old Gobbo, who enters right, carrying a basket. At first Launcelot speaks in a feigned voice. When Bassanio and Leonardo enter right, they are merely in the act of passing by, until interrupted by Gobbo, and Bassanio is continuing some conversation to his servant. He should therefore begin to speak before entering the stage. As Leonardo starts to go out left, Gratiano enters left, and thus meets Leonardo as he goes. At the close of the scene Bassanio exits left and Gratiano right.

Act II.—Scene 3

A Room in Shylock's House

Proscenium curtain opens showing middle-stage. Jessica and Launcelot enter left. Launcelot is grieved at the thought of leaving Jessica. On the farewell words Launcelot exits right and Jessica left.

Act II.—Scene 4

A Street

Proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage only. Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, and Salanio enter right. Lorenzo's message to Jessica should be whispered in Launcelot's ear. Salarino and Salanio exeunt left at the close of the scene, Gratiano and Lorenzo right.

Act II.—Scene 5

Before Shylock's House

Proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage, but the traverse dividing the fore-stage from the middle-stage is partly opened

to represent a door. Shylock and Launcelot enter through this doorway and remain standing right of it. When Shylock calls " What, Jessica ", he calls up-stage to Jessica, who is inside the doorway. Both Launcelot, who is sent ahead with a message, and Shylock exeunt left. When Jessica exits it is through this doorway, the curtains of which she closes behind her.

Act II.—Scene 6

Before Shylock's House

Proscenium curtain opens showing scene as above, except that the doorway curtains are closed. It is night-time, Gratiano and Salarino enter wearing masks; they stand in the shadow of Shylock's house and look about, somewhat impatiently, expecting Lorenzo. When Lorenzo calls, " Ho, who's within?" he does so up-stage; the middle-stage traverse curtains open to reveal Jessica, dressed in boy's clothes, looking through a window which has been placed in the centre of the rear-stage traverse curtains. This window may be made merely out of thin strips of wood nailed across one another to suggest the form of window-panes, and hung from the curtain-rod. Or the window-frame may be eliminated altogether, and suggested only by a gap in the curtains. When Jessica states that she will " Make fast the door " and gild herself with ducats, the rear-stage traverse curtains close, Gratiano, Salarino, and Lorenzo walk down-stage and pace slowly up and down the fore-stage, taking care to be in front of the middle-stage traverse curtains. When Jessica enters it is through the centre of this middle-stage traverse curtain, which has still remained open; she joins the others on the fore-stage, and takes Lorenzo's hand. The middle-stage traverse curtains close, leaving only the fore-stage visible. Jessica, Lorenzo, and Salarino exeunt left, Antonio enters right. At the close of the scene Gratiano and Antonio exeunt left.

Act II.—Scene 7

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House

Proscenium curtain opens showing middle-stage as in Act II, Scene 1; the top traverse curtains hiding the caskets are at first drawn. There is a flourish of cornets, and Portia and

Nerissa enter right with the Prince of Morocco and their trains. Portia and her retinue stand left, watching anxiously while the top traverse curtains are drawn back and the Prince of Morocco goes forward to examine the caskets. When unsuccessful he exits left sadly, the top traverse curtains are closed, and Portia and Nerissa exeunt right.

Act II.—Scene 8

Venice. A Street

Proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage only as in Act I, Scene 1. Salarino and Salanio enter left; they walk up and down, discussing the latest news of Venice; they exeunt right.

Act II.—Scene 9

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House

Proscenium curtain opens showing middle-stage as in Act II, Scene 1. Nerissa enters right with a servitor, who draws back the top rear-stage traverse curtains, revealing the caskets, since another suitor is about to make his choice. There is a flourish of cornets, and the Prince of Arragon, Portia, and their retinue enter right. The servitor goes out with an obeisance after displaying the caskets. When Arragon has made his choice, he exits left with his train; Nerissa covers up the caskets and closes the top traverse curtains, a servant enters right on the fore-stage, and, after hearing his message, Portia and Nerissa exeunt right. If an interval is required, it should be taken here.

Act III.—Scene 1

Venice. A Street

Proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage only as Act I, Scene 1. Salanio and Salarino enter left, anxiously discussing the fact that nearly three months have elapsed and no news has been received of Antonio's ships. Shylock enters right, and during his baiting by Salanio and Salarino his anger increases. Tubal enters left, and Salanio and Salarino follow the servant out right; at the close of the scene Shylock exits right and Tubal left.

Act III.—Scene 2

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House

Proscenium curtain opens showing middle-stage and rear-stage as in Act I, Scene 2, with the caskets disclosed. Gratiano, Nerissa, Bassanio, Portia, and attendants enter right. Nerissa takes the covering from the casket, but Portia, whose former indifference in the presence of her suitors has quite vanished, tries to persuade Bassanio to delay the fatal decision. Bassanio, who is as anxious as she is, goes up to the table and examines every casket carefully while musicians play and sing. Portia shows intense joy and relief when he decides to select the leaden casket and hands him the key. At the close of her speech, "You see me, Lord Bassanio", Gratiano and Nerissa talk quietly together, and Nerissa gives Gratiano a ring. Lorenzo, Jessica, and Salerio enter left; at the close of the scene all exeunt right.

Act III.—Scene 3

Venice. A Street

Proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage only as Act I, Scene 1. Shylock, Salarino, Antonio, and the gaoler enter left. Shylock has arrested Antonio for debt, but the latter has come, accompanied by his gaoler and his friend Salarino, to beg for a respite. This Shylock refuses and exits right. Antonio, Salarino, and the gaoler exeunt left.

Act III.—Scene 4

Belmont. A Room in Portia's House

Proscenium curtain opens showing middle-stage scene as Act II, Scene 1. Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, and Balthasar enter right. Bassanio and Gratiano have gone to the assistance of Antonio, and Portia is meanwhile thinking out her plan of action. At the close of the scene she and Nerissa exeunt left.

Act III.—Scene 5

A Garden

Proscenium curtain opens showing fore-stage only, which may be made to convey the impression of a garden by placing upon it hurdles covered with evergreens to represent shrubs or thickets, by the introduction of small bay trees in pots, or by cutting shapes of cypress trees out of beaver-board, painting them, and attaching them to the floor by means of an angle bracket. Launcelot, Lorenzo, and Jessica enter right, continuing some conversation and consequently talking before they enter the stage; at the close they exeunt left.

Act IV.—Scene 1

Venice. A Court of Justice

Proscenium curtain opens showing the whole stage. On the rear-stage, seats are placed in a semicircle for the Duke and the Magnificoes. A sense of decoration would be acquired if the backs of these seats were draped with brocades and, if possible, the central ones were raised on a platform. Salerio and attendants enter right and see that everything is in order Bassanio and Gratiano enter left. The Magnificoes and the Duke enter right, then the gaoler brings on Antonio left down-stage. All group themselves as a court. Salerio leaves the stage after showing Shylock in right, and re-enters right when he announces the messenger from Padua. Upon the words "I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?" Shylock may begin to sharpen a knife on a steel attached to his girdle or on the sole of his boot. One of the Magnificoes can read Bellario's letter if there are not enough actors to provide a clerk. At the close of the scene Shylock totters out of the court left, the Duke and the Magnificoes exeunt right. Finally Portia and Nerissa exeunt left, Antonio and Bassanio right.

Act IV.—Scene 2

A Street

Proscenium curtains open showing fore-stage as Act I, Scene 1. Nerissa and Portia, overjoyed by their success, are

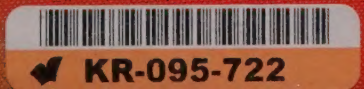
returning to Belmont and enter left. Gratiano overtakes them left, Portia exits right, but Nerissa and Gratiano exeunt together left.

Act V.—Scene 1

Belmont. Avenue to Portia's House

Proscenium curtains open showing middle-stage. The back traverse curtains may be open a few feet to show a lantern which would appear to be hanging from the balcony of the house. The lantern may be made of draughtsman's linen stretched Chinese-lantern fashion on a wooden frame. The design of the lantern may be applied in coloured ink such as draughtsmen use. The lantern should then be hung on a rod or curtain-pole. A piece of wire should be inserted in the centre of the lantern to hold a candle or taper. An effective and safe form of lantern can also be achieved by purchasing the ordinary storm lantern, mounting it on a pole, and gilding it. The lights in this scene should be low and, if possible, the bulbs should be covered with blue and green silk or gelatine in alternate colours, to give the effect of moonlight. Trees or bushes may be placed in two narrowing lines up-stage in such a way that they represent an avenue, and a bench placed down-stage left. Lorenzo and Jessica enter right, and will presently sit on the bench. Stephano enters left and Launcelot right. When Launcelot returns to the house right, Lorenzo turns to follow him right, on the words, " Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming ", then changes his mind and turns back, leading Jessica down-stage left on the words, " And yet no matter: why should we go in?" The musicians enter and play on the rear-stage beneath the lantern. Lorenzo and Jessica walk up-stage to listen to them. Portia and Nerissa enter behind them left and remain well down-stage, looking up at the light and listening to the music.

Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano, and their followers enter left. Bassanio embraces Portia and they stand talking right; Gratiano and Nerissa stand farther up-stage left. During this scene the lighting should be increased by the use of amber-coloured bulbs to suggest the gradual faint dawn of day. At the close of the scene all exeunt right.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